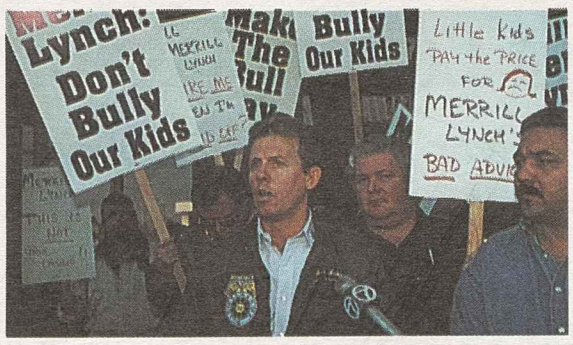


Teamsters confront Merrill Lynch officials on their involvement in the bankruptcy of Orange County, Calif. **See story, Page 2.**

AFL-CIO NEWS

VOLUME 40, NUMBER 1 JANUARY 9, 1995

Harsh new Congress threatens workers

Basic rights at risk in wide-range assault

By Mike Hall

With the Republicans seizing control of both the House and Senate for the first time in four decades, labor's congressional goals and strategy will take on a distinctively defensive posture.

During the 104th Congress, the GOP is expected to take aim at such core labor issues as collective bargaining protections, wage standards, workplace safety programs and job training. Unions are expecting a variety of battles — from direct assaults on programs to efforts to reduce funding or weaken them through so-called regulatory reform.

The AFL-CIO made clear it would vigorously oppose GOP proposals that threaten workers' unions, wages, jobs, safety and health and retirement security.

''I don't believe every Republican believes that workers aren't entitled to decency on the job or that workers are not entitled to a free choice of being represented by a union or not,'' said AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Thomas R. Donahue. ''I don't think that Republicans in their hearts are going to believe that workers should be fired because they want to join a union.''

Despite the generally anti-worker atmosphere in Congress, the AFL-CIO will attempt to find Republican allies on certain issues. ''The trade union movement wants to work with anyone who wants to work with us,'' Donahue said. ''There are 'decent thinking Republicans' who want to do the right thing.''

The AFL-CIO's Legislative Action Committee program will begin an outreach to Republican officeholders in an effort to find if there is common ground on important labor issues. Meanwhile, the overall AFL-CIO political grass-roots program will become even more important.

Labor also will be working together with the Clinton administration on many issues.

House Republican leaders symbolically began their attack when they changed the name of the House Education and Labor Committee to the Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee. The Senate also abolished its labor subcommittee of the Labor and Human Resources Committee.

Many elements of the House Republicans' so-called ''Contract with America'' would harm the interests of workers and their families. Donahue described the ''contract'' as ''bad ideas, or good ideas carried to ridiculous extremes.'' While 10 bills that make up the ''contract'' are of concern to labor, three stand out as particularly threatening.

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Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland poses question to Mark Gersh during committees' election briefing.

'Play defense, look for opportunities'

By Michael Byrne

Two key committees of the AFL-CIO Executive Council surveyed the landscape after November's election bomb and found hope amid the rubble.

With Democrats scurrying for cover and Republicans rising in Congress to square off against President Clinton, workers' interests are very much at risk over the next two years, AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland said. But opportunity also glimmers on the political horizon.

Kirkland said as bad as the election was, it would also have been bad for Democrats to maintain control of Congress by a slim margin when, with a large margin in the previous Congress, they couldn't —or wouldn't — work together sufficiently well to reform health care or adopt Workplace Fairness, among other key labor issues.

The historic drive for health care reform was derailed primarily because of divisions in the Democratic Party, Kirkland pointed out, ''without the Republicans getting any blood on their hands.'' Conservative Democrats, particularly those identified with the Democratic Leadership Council, killed it for them.

In fact, health care was the No. 1 issue among voters surveyed by exit pollsters, members of the Political Work and Legislative Priorities committees were told. At the same time, voters overwhelmingly rejected such conservative Democrats as Reps. Jim Cooper (Tenn.) and Dave McCurdy (Okla.), who carried the ball for the minimalist DLC health care proposal.

The joint meeting of the AFL-CIO committees focused on lessons from the election, rather than legislative prospects. Kirkland said it was too early to have a detailed discussion on the legislative agenda.

''We play defense,'' he said, ''and we look for opportunities.''

The numbers presented by Mark Gersh of the National Committee for an Effective Congress showed that, after health care (30 percent), voters' chief concerns were a need for change (25 percent) and economy/jobs (22 percent). Of those who chose health care as a primary concern, 65 percent voted Democratic.

On the other side of the ledger, among those who expressed a need for change, 71 percent voted

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Changing face of labor reflects new horizons for organizing

By Candice Johnson

The face of American labor is changing — becoming younger, more educated and more female. Unionists now are more likely to have some collar other than the traditional blue variety.

These demographic and economic characteristics emerge from several new studies of union membership, pointing not only to current trends but portending new horizons for organizing:

- Women's participation rates as a percent of the labor force have grown 24 percent over the past 10 years and women now make up 39.2 percent of union membership, up from 21.8 percent in 1970.

Women, underpaid and overworked in service and professional occupations, clearly have been hearing the union message. As successful organizing campaigns at hospitals, universities and data processing centers have shown, women want the value — both in dollars and respect — of an independent voice on the job.

- While manufacturing has taken a beating over the past 10 years, with some 1.3 million manufacturing jobs lost since the 1980s, union membership in professional and service sectors have increased.

Professional union membership has increased by 612,000 members, clericals by 128,000, movers and transportation workers by 250,000 and protective services workers by 220,000. These occupations are predicted to continue growing into the 21st century, providing new opportunities for unions.

Union advantage keen

Even as their numbers grow, women and minorities stand to gain substantially from a union card, according to the two studies, a compilation of government union membership figures over the past 10 years by the AFL-CIO Economic Research Department and statistics on white-collar employees compiled by the federation's Department for Professional Employees.

Increasingly, the work force is wearing a white collar, DPE finds, noting that white-collar workers made

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ORGANIZING

Overnite drivers on roll

Despite an attempt by management to influence a nationwide organizing drive at Overnite Transportation Co., workers at two Overnite locations have voted in the Teamsters.

The company's effort to ''sweet talk'' workers by offering wage and benefit increases simply shows that that ''changes handed down at the whim of management are no substitute for a union contract negotiated and approved by the workers,'' the IBT said.

Overnite workers in Indianapolis voted for representation by IBT Local 135 by a 126-55 vote; workers in Kansas City voted in IBT Local 41 by a 157-126 margin; and freight workers in Minnesota filed for a representation election late last month.

Meetings also have been held with drivers in Lexington and Louisville, Ky., and St. Louis.

USWA gets bargaining order

The Steelworkers won a big victory in their fight for a first contract at the Bridgman, Mich., plant of Weldun International Inc.

A National Labor Relations Board administrative law judge ordered Weldun, an auto parts manufacturer, to recognize the USWA as the bargaining agent for some 140 workers, and to reinstate and pay more than $2 million to 29 workers who had been illegally fired.

The judge cited numerous illegal and unfair labor practices committed by Weldun during the organizing campaign that began in November 1992.

UNION NEWS

AFT, NEA halt talks

The AFT and the unaffiliated National Education Association agreed to end merger discussions that have taken place over the past 18 months.

The talks broke off amicably after both unions reluctantly agreed that many of the internal issues separating the two organizations were insurmountable at this time. AFT and NEA leaders plan to meet again to discuss ways of creating a closer and more productive working relationship as separate organizations.

Unions fight Orange County layoffs

Bad investments being balanced on backs of workers

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

Unions are mobilizing to protect the paychecks of thousands of workers in Orange County, Calif., following the county's bankruptcy filing last month.

In light of the county's bleak financial situation, the board of supervisors suspended collective bargaining agreements and gave county managers broad discretion over whom they could fire, regardless of a worker's seniority. The board also immediately reduced the county's budget by $40.2 million.

Orange County Employees Association/AFSCME, the Service Employees, the Teamsters, Fire Fighters and Operating Engineers represent some 18,000 workers in the county.

AFSCME, representing 11,000 workers, voted Dec. 26 to authorize legal action against the county for setting aside layoff procedures in the collective bargaining agreement. The county fired eight part-time employees earning $9 to $17 per hour as part of its first step to lessen budget woes.

''When somebody in management screws up, instead of starting at the bottom they ought to start at the top and work their way down,'' said Bill Fogarty, executive secretary-treasurer of the Orange County AFL-CIO.

In place of seniority-based reductions called for in the agreements, the county's resolution sets out a new procedure to be implemented immediately that calls for employees to be retained on the basis of special or unique experience, knowledge or skills, and superior performance and productivity.

The emergency resolution also set aside 1994-96 salary adjustments called for in the agreements, said John Sawyer Jr. of AFSCME.

However, the board was urged by a coalition of citizen groups to take a 10 percent cut in member's $82,000-per-year salaries. The board has not responded to the group's proposal.

The county based its authority to set aside the agreements with the union on emergency provisions of the California constitution. The union says the county seriously misread the act, which essentially permits the adoption of necessary regulations in the face of an emergency.

The act says essentially that ''if there is a real, genuine emergency, you can act first, and talk later,'' explained Sawyer.

However, in the case of Orange County's bankruptcy filing, a framework — the union agreements — already existed for dealing with layoffs necessitated by the ''emergency,'' said Sawyer. ''I think the county is stretching it to say this provision allows them to suspend collective bargaining agreements.''

The union also will argue that the county's bankruptcy filing is not the kind of ''emergency'' the act was written to cover. Essential services in the county have not been interrupted, and at least some department heads have said they can absorb budget cuts without having to lay off workers, said Sawyer.

Meanwhile, the IBT released information that shows that northern California Merrill Lynch employees contributed to the re-election campaign of Orange County Treasurer Bob Citron, whose investments were responsible for the county's financial downfall, in apparent violation of Securities and Exchange Commission rules.

Three employees of Merrill Lynch contributed $1,000 each to the re-election campaign of the Orange County treasurer, according to a campaign disclosure statement filed with the registrar of voters for Orange County. Merrill Lynch underwrote $600 million in Orange County notes last July.

Regulations bar securities firms and their employees from seeking certain underwriting contracts after they contribute more than $250 to political officials who could affect the decisions on contract awards.

''We want to know if firms such as Merrill Lynch are seducing public agencies to gamble taxpayer dollars on speculative, unregulated investments,'' said Ed J. Mireles, secretary-treasurer of IBT Local 952 in Orange County.

The IBT has requested documents from the county treasurer, called for an investigation by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission and asked for congressional hearings.

Merrill Lynch is already under investigation by the SEC after it counseled the county to make investments that dropped severely in value. The questionable advice, which lost thousands for the county, resulted in high fees for the financial firm.

In a letter to California Sens. Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer, Mireles wrote, ''The Orange County debacle is making the harm that rogue securities firms can do to taxpayers and citizens more clear and tangible.''

Baltimore adopts 'living wage' for contract workers

City contractors in Baltimore must pay service workers a minimum ''living wage'' that is the first of its kind in the nation, thanks to union-supported legislation passed by the city council and signed by Mayor Kurt Schmoke.

Effective July 1995, the law applies to service contracts with the city and requires minimum hourly wages of ''a rate which exceeds the poverty level'' — ranging from $6.10 in 1995 with increases in annual increments to $7.70 in 1999. Currently, service workers often just earn $4.25 an hour, the U.S. minimum wage.

''This law provides a unique and concrete social compact for the workers who do some of the most thankless jobs in the city — the people who clean toilets in office buildings, empty trash cans in our schools, assist children on school buses and make beds in one of Baltimore's finest hotels,'' said AFSCME President Gerald W. McEntee.

AFSCME and Baltimoreans United in Leadership Development (BUILD), a church-based organization, spearheaded the legislative effort and established a new organization of low-wage service workers, the Solidarity Sponsoring Committee.

Like other cities nationwide, Baltimore had made a practice of awarding lucrative service contracts to private contractors, turning a blind eye when the contractors paid poorly. Meanwhile, the city was left to cope with low-wage workers who still needed food stamps, publicly financed health care and other costly assistance.

With this law, Baltimore has taken ''a first step away from a low-wage economy that degrades work to one that creates jobs that will allow Baltimore's families to support themselves,'' McEntee explained.

''I want to underscore the point that this is an important step but just the first step,'' said Schmoke at the Dec. 13 bill-signing ceremony at City Hall. ''Wages have to be increased in this country.''

The law's impact on the city budget had not yet been determined, but city officials said contractors could choose to absorb the increases to keep their bids low or might try to pass them on.

Contractors in Baltimore must submit certified payroll reports to the city within two weeks after the completion of a job.

Those who do not pay prevailing wage rates are penalized.

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Director of Information: Rex Hardesty

Editor: Michael Byrne

Assistant Editors: Candice Johnson, David Kameras, James B. Parks

Staff Writers: Muriel H. Cooper, Mike Hall, Colleen M. O'Neill, Sharolyn A. Rosier

Graphics/layout: Stan Hitt

AFL-CIO Headquarters: 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006
Telephone: (202) 637-5010
CompuServe: 76004,3601

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Unions wary of new Congress

Bills would seek to codify right-wing 'contract'

(Continued from Page 1)

The first is the balanced budget constitutional amendment, scheduled for a Jan. 19 vote in the House. Despite its misleading title, the Fiscal Responsibility Act would actually shift even more costs to states, forcing the dismantling of vital government programs and services.

The amendment also would force more than $400 billion of spending cuts or tax increases to bring the budget into balance.

The second ''contract'' item that could cause serious damage to working families is the so-called ''Job Creation and Wage Enhancement Act.'' The bill itself creates no jobs, but instead calls for a capital gains tax cut with the vast majority of the benefits going to businesses and wealthier taxpayers.

The measure also would reduce and block the government's ability to set and enforce standards or regulations on businesses. Those could range from safety standards to clean air and water regulations.

Progress threatened

This bill also is the House vehicle to ban unfunded federal mandates on state and local governments. That drive could put decades of progress in civil rights, environmental, health, welfare, public safety, minimum wage and worker protection laws at risk. An unfunded mandate is any provision of a federal law or regulation that requires a state or local government to do anything which might cost it any money.

A number of unfunded mandates apply to state and local governments as employers, such as the Family and Medical Leave Act, child labor, minimum wage and anti-discrimination laws.

Advocates of the ban claim it would only apply to future laws, but the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities found that existing legislation would be affected when reauthorized or amended. Such action would be considered new legislation and would cause the existing mandate to fall under the obligation for full funding. Thus, the ban on unfunded mandates would begin to roll back legislation that includes laws already in place, the study said.

The Senate plans to take up its version of unfunded mandate legislation and a balanced budget amendment early in the session.

The other major troublesome ''contract'' item is the GOP's welfare reform plan and its impact on work-related issues. The legislation would redesign welfare to place recipients in jobs at the expense of existing public and private workers. It also would require welfare recipients to work off their benefits at rates that could be less than half the minimum wage.

Fighting the attacks on labor's key issues will be made more difficult because the Republicans control the legislative process.

While the ''contract'' has received a great deal of publicity, the GOP's plans for various budget bills pose another serious threat.

Rather than making attempts to repeal or eliminate important government programs directly, the Republican majority can simply refuse to fund those programs. It is expected they will re-visit the already approved FY 1995 appropriations through a recision bill which could reduce or eliminate funding for vital worker-oriented programs and services.

The same effort will be made through the FY 1996 budget resolution and the FY 1996 appropriations process.

Poor labor records

Fighting these attacks on labor's key issues will be made more difficult because the Republicans control the legislative process. It will be difficult to influence such things as when a bill is scheduled for the floor, whether a bill is satisfactorily reported from committee, or even if hearings are scheduled on important issues.

A look at the labor records of the new House and Senate leaders and committee chairs shows how difficult it will be to get a fair hearing on important legislation.

House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) has a 10 percent AFL-CIO voting record, Majority Leader Richard K. Armey (R-Texas) 2 percent, Economic and Educational Opportunities Chairman William F. Goodling (R-Pa.) 27 percent, and Ways and Means Chairman William Archer (R-Texas) 4 percent.

In the Senate, Majority Leader Robert Dole (R-Kan.) comes in at 16 percent, Majority Whip Trent Lott (R-Miss.) at 17 percent and Labor and Human Resources Chairwoman Nancy L. Kassebaum (R-Kan.) at 20 percent.

Dunlop result disappointing

With the final report of the Commission on Worker-Management Relations scheduled to be unveiled Jan. 9, it appeared that the panel had not lived up to its promise.

The draft recommendations were disappointing, the AFL-CIO said, because the commission earlier had identified the growing inequity in earnings between supervisors and workers, noted the decline of unionization as a factor in that inequity and even said a stronger worker voice was what was needed to correct the problem.

But rather than seeking to strengthen the independence of that worker voice, the commission apparently was prepared to recommend that employers be allowed to speak for workers. The draft report suggested that in non-union workplaces, employers be allowed to appoint and dominate ''worker committees'' to deal with the selected topics of training, job safety and grievances.

At least one member of the commission, former UAW President Doug Fraser, disputed the logic in allowing the boss to dictate terms to worker groups on some aspects of job conditions and not others. The 10-member panel is chaired by former Secretary of Labor John T. Dunlop.

From what was known of commission drafts before the final signoff by commissioners on Jan. 6, AFL-CIO observers anticipated other sections of the report to say:

- Representation elections should be conducted as promptly as administratively feasible, typically within two weeks.
- First-contract disputes should be addressed through a system of mediation and a tripartite advisory board empowered with various tools, including binding arbitration.
- Union organizers should have better access to workers in privately owned but publicly held spaces such as shopping malls.
- The injunction authority now used for dealing with secondary boycotts — injunctions that are mandatory and don't require approval from the full NLRB — should be used to remedy discriminatory actions against employees for union activity.

Effort to gut Social Security, Medicare shelved

By David Kameras

Social Security and Medicare have dodged a bullet for now, but a showdown is inevitable with the gunslingers who aim to shoot down ''entitlement'' spending.

By a 24 to 6 vote, the Commission on Entitlement and Tax Reform agreed to tell President Clinton that it could not reach common ground on ways to make the elderly and infirm foot the bill for future budget deficit reduction.

The commission's default took place after an intense effort by unions and their allies to counter the effort by the commission's chairman and vice chairman, Sens. Robert J. Kerrey (D-Neb.) and John C. Danforth (R-Mo.), to reduce Social Security benefits, increase the retirement age and make those under 70 pay for their Medicare coverage.

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland urged commission members to reject the Kerrey/Danforth proposals, which he said ''would severely weaken the retirement income and health system that Americans have enjoyed for 60 years.''

Kirkland, who served on a 1983 panel that reformed Social Security, told the commission last September that ''this is an easy issue to demagogue. . . There's a lot of political capital to be made by casting 'entitlements' as Godzilla and scaring the wits out of people.''

The short of it, Kirkland said, is that America doesn't have a Social Security crisis but does have a health care crisis. That is proven by the solvency of the pension trust fund in contrast to the financial problems of Medicare and Medicaid.

The day before the vote, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Thomas R. Donahue told a Capitol Hill news conference that the options considered by the Entitlement Commission, if implemented, ''would be a disaster for the working people who depend on programs like Social Security and Medicare to make ends meet when they retire.''

''Average working people would suffer the most,'' he said. ''These are the same workers who pay the highest proportion of their income into the system and for whom Social Security makes up the vast majority of their income when they retire.''

''The commission should stick to the problem,'' he said. ''Address the health care crisis and you'll lay the groundwork for resolving this so-called 'entitlement crisis.' ''

The Kerrey/Danforth plan sought to:

- Cut Social Security income for Americans of average income by 44 percent, with a more severe impact on women and minorities.
- Reduce job opportunities for young workers by encouraging older workers to stay on the job until they are 70.
- Shift to individuals the investment risk of a portion of Social Security.
- Increase costs to employers through cuts in Medicare and Social Security.

Mine Workers President Richard Trumka, the sole labor member on the commission, told Kerrey his proposals ''represent the most fundamental attack on Social Security and Medicare since their beginning'' and would ''give working Americans one more reason to feel cynical about Washington's ability to solve the problems we face.''

Trumka said the challenge is one of revenues, not spending, reflecting that ''continued corporate downsizing and a steady slide toward a low-wage economy have, in effect, conspired to diminish the tax base for programs that serve our aging population.''

Trumka noted that although the AFL-CIO and others ''have raised the issue of corporate welfare, and suggested sensible cuts of over $100 billion a year, they appear nowhere in the options. In effect, this commission's message to America is that we must destroy these programs in order to save them.''

The National Council of Senior Citizens has launched a print and broadcast media campaign in Omaha, in Kerrey's home state of Nebraska, warning citizens of what will happen should the Kerrey/Danforth proposals be enacted.

NCSC, AFL-CIO and the American Association of Retired Persons are working together to produce a set of educational materials for unions and other groups to promote workplace discussion of Social Security.

While the collapse of the Entitlement Commission means the retirement system is likely to remain relatively safe until after the next election cycle, an all-out assault on Medicare may yet be in the cards.

Medicare, which faces genuine funding problems in the not-distant future, cannot be restored to a sound footing unless very tough cost-control measures, in both the private and public sectors, are implemented, analysts say.

Report shows urgent need for ergonomic rule

By Colleen M. O'Neill

Cumulative trauma disorders are rising at an alarming rate, becoming a scourge of the American workplace.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics' annual report for 1993 on illness and injuries shows progress in reducing workplace injuries, the AFL-CIO noted, but also shows that poor job design and repetitive motion activities continue to afflict workers with CTDs.

Such industries as meatpacking and auto assembly — where OSHA and employers have installed ergonomic control measures to prevent CTDs — saw CTD rates decline for the first time in 1993.

"The message from the BLS report is that OSHA needs to move forward now with an ergonomics standard," said Peg Seminario, job safety director for the federation, "so that workers in all industries can be protected from crippling injuries."

"The lack of a standard has left hundreds of thousands of workers needlessly crippled," said Food and Commercial Workers President Douglas Dority. "We know how to prevent CTDs; now is the time to do it."

The number of new cases of CTDs has mushroomed from 34,700 reported in 1984 to 302,000 in 1993 — a 770 percent increase over one decade. The incidence rates for CTDs have taken a corresponding jump, from 5.1 per 10,000 full-time workers in private industry in 1984 to 38.3 per 10,000 full-time workers in 1993. CTDs include cases of carpal tunnel syndrome, tendinitis and shoulder pain.

The BLS survey released in late December reported 6.7 million injuries and illnesses in private-industry workplaces during the year, a rate of 8.5 cases for every 100 equivalent full-time workers. Of those 6.7 million, nearly 6.3 million were injuries resulting in lost worktime, medical treatment other than first aid, loss of consciousness, restriction of work or motion or transfer to another job. The remainder were work-related illnesses, the majority of which were CTDs.

It is the continued overwhelming need for job safety improvements that spurred about 450 activists to gather in Los Angeles in early December for the AFL-CIO's national job safety and health conference, "Safe Jobs: Our Right. Our Fight."

The conference focused on the job safety roles of the government, unions and workers themselves, with particular emphasis on what steps may be taken at the grass roots to achieve safer work environments.

Participants attended workshops on ergonomics, indoor air quality, HIV/AIDS, industrial hygiene, workers' compensation, training methods, organizing and safety and health, environmental audits/pollution prevention, computer databases, the Americans with Disabilities Act, bargaining for safety and health committees, construction safety, TB/infection control, violence/assault, right-to-know and chemical process safety. Workshops also were held by sector.

The toll on workers from poor job design and repetitive motions also received great scrutiny.

"For us in the trade union movement, the most pressing goal in the safety and health area is obtaining an ergonomics standard," said AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Thomas R. Donahue. "We will not rest until we have achieved that goal, and we know that it is achievable."

Trade unionists should keep in mind the power of the presidency, Donahue said, and encourage the Clinton administration to move forward with a message that safety and health regulations will be enforced.

"Another thing we can do is to keep in mind just what our time frame is," he said. "There are no quick and easy battles for healthy and safe workplaces, and never have been. The major battles that we fight usually don't take two months or even two years. They take two decades.

"In other words, all of us who fight for OSHA protections aren't summer soldiers. We expect to be soldiers this summer, this winter, and several summers and winters after that."

Conferees also touched on the anti-regulatory climate being fashioned by incoming Republican Hill leaders, particularly the possibility of a "regulatory budget" being imposed on OSHA.

JOB SAFETY

GM settles ergonomic case

UAW members at General Motors plants are the winners after the company agreed to pay $420,000 in penalties and jointly sponsor ergonomic-related symposia for government, labor and industry.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration issued citations in late November against the company for violations of a 1990 settlement with GM that established an ergonomics program covering more than 300,000 workers at 138 UAW-represented plants.

Sony to pay $550,000

Improvements in lockout/tagout and confined space safety programs and $550,000 in fines were ordered for Sony Magnetic Products Inc. in the wake of a fatal accident last summer.

OSHA levied the fines and required changes after a July 3 confined-space incident at the company's Dothan, Ala., plant in which one worker died and a second was injured while attempting a rescue.

The company has agreed to address deficiencies in its safety programs and file periodic reports.

Shipyard safety hearing set

OSHA is to hold an open meeting Jan. 25 in Washington to discuss personal protective equipment requirements for the shipyard industry.

The meeting will offer the public a chance to make oral presentations or submit written comments, and is set for 9 a.m. in Room N3437 of the Frances Perkins Building at 200 Constitution Ave. N.W.

Notices of intention to appear at the meeting must be postmarked by Jan. 11, and written comments must be received no later than Jan. 25.

U.S. toy makers blamed for Thai disaster

By James B. Parks

Major U.S. toy companies must share the blame for the worst factory fire in the world because they use producers in Asian countries that ignore worker rights and safety, a new study concludes.

In a scathing report, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions documents the close ties between major toy manufacturers and a network of unsafe sweatshops in Asia. Some 45 percent of the world's toys now are produced under license for the companies, mainly in China, Thailand and other Southeast Asian countries.

The Kader Toy factory near Bangkok, where 188 workers were killed and 469 injured in a May 1993 fire, produced toys for Fisher-Price, Toys R Us, Hasbro, J.C. Penney and Tyco.

The Kader fire, the report said, was caused by a flagrant disregard of basic safety requirements, procedures and building regulations. Locked doors and barred windows prevented many of the workers from escaping. Fire alarms were out of order in one building and there were no sprinkler systems. Flammable materials were kept on the walkways and the factory's ground floor and burning raw materials gave off poisonous fumes that incapacitated many workers.

"There was the sound of yelling about a fire. I tried to leave the section but the supervisor told me to get back to work," said Lampan Taptim, a worker who survived the fire.

Taptim described how he and his sister tried to go down the stairs from the fourth floor, but found the stairs had already caved in.

"There was a lot of yelling and confusion," he said. "I couldn't go down further. In desperation I went back up to the windows and went back and forth looking down below. The smoke was thick and I picked the best place to jump in a pile of boxes. My sister jumped too. She died."

"Armed with this report, which details negligence on a shocking scale, trade unionists and their allies around the world can now demand that these major toy manufacturers and producing countries fully accept their responsibilities for the hazardous and exploitative conditions that can lead at any time to another such tragedy," said Lucien Royer, an ICFTU health and safety official.

"We will accept no less. We will marshal support and pressure producers to cease these intolerable conditions, including child labor, slave wages, abusive and dangerous working conditions and suppression of the right to organize unions," Royer said.

Recalling the tragic Triangle Shirtwaist fire in 1911, which spurred Americans to demand workplace safety reform, Ladies' Garment Workers President Jay Mazur said trade unionists must be similarly forceful in pressing for international action "to require all producers worldwide to protect workers, to end child labor and to create safe working conditions in their factories.

"The American people will be reminded that, when they purchase holiday toys for their children, the happiness shared should not be at the expense of young workers — many children themselves — whose very lives may have been put at risk making the toys."

The key to changing the deplorable conditions in these factories is universal acceptance of workers' rights to organize and bargain collectively, the report concludes. Forced labor and child labor should be ended, starting with the most dangerous and exploitative industries, it said.

The report, titled "From the Ashes," called on new methods of cooperation between the International Labor Organization and the fledgling World Trade Organization to ensure that "no country is able to steal a competitive edge through repression, discrimination and gross exploitation of workers."

AFSCME resists Memphis hospital bid to break union

By Muriel H. Cooper

The Memphis Regional Medical Center failed in its bid to block workers from voting in their union. But that hasn't stopped the hospital from trying to change the rules after the fact and keep workers from having a voice on the job.

By taking extreme measures to bust a union that represents nearly 1,000 workers, the Tennessee hospital is earning a deservedly bad reputation in the community it claims to serve.

Last year, hospital management unilaterally decided to throw out AFSCME Local 1733.

When community and civic supporters rallied around the workers, the hospital reluctantly agreed to another representation election. But management tried to stack the deck, and continues to deny the authority of the National Labor Relations Board.

In its effort to ensure a "no union" vote, management nearly doubled the size of the unit by adding professional and white collar workers who managers believed were not union supporters. The hospital also unilaterally set the election date.

But the plan backfired when 940 workers voted for union representation and 812 voted for no union, with 12 ballots voided.

Still, the Med Center pursued its anti-union agenda, declaring that AFSCME actually lost the election because a majority of the 1,958 eligible employees had not voted for union representation.

Claiming that the hospital, as a private-public entity, was not subject to NLRB jurisdiction, hospital managers said that 194 workers who did not vote should be counted as voting "no union," declaring that the union fell 40 votes short of victory.

But by setting its own rules, the hospital ignored the National Labor Relations Act, which provides that an election outcome is determined by the majority of workers voting.

Hospital management disregarded an NLRB determination, upheld unanimously by the U.S. Supreme Court, that set eight separate bargaining units for hospital workers and barred including professional and non-professional workers in the same bargaining unit without their consent.

The union, community supporters and the media denounced the hospital's actions. "We agreed to abide by a free and fair election," said AFSCME Secretary-Treasurer William Lucy. "This one wasn't free or fair, but the workers won anyway because they want their union back."

In a December 21 editorial, the Memphis "Commercial Appeal" declared that "the election, as determined by the Med, was unsatisfactory. No one but a Med administrator is likely to see a fair outcome."

COURTS

Project agreements upheld

Reversing a lower court ruling, the New York Supreme Court unanimously upheld project labor agreement requirements in bid specifications on two separate state-funded projects.

Last August, the lower court ruled that project labor agreements on the $130 million Tappan Zee Bridge renovation and the $170 million Roswell Park state hospital expansion project violated state competitive bidding laws.

The project agreements, modeled after pacts negotiated for the cleanup of Boston Harbor, were approved by the state this spring. The U.S. Supreme Court upheld the union-only Boston Harbor agreement, ruling that when the state acts as the owner of a construction project, it has the right to implement a prehire agreement.

GM retirees supported

The Labor Department has asked a federal appeals court to require General Motors Corp. to provide lifetime health benefits to 84,000 retirees.

Over the past 10 years, GM promised to pay almost the entire cost of lifetime health benefits for salaried workers and their surviving spouses. Then in 1988, the company unilaterally reduced health benefits for retirees and increased the employees' monthly contributions and co-payments.

Former employees sued GM, alleging the company failed to comply with the terms of its health plan. A federal district court ruled against the retirees in 1991, who then appealed. The DOL filed a friend-of-the-court brief in the appeals court saying the summary plan description provided to employees by GM "unambiguously promised lifetime benefits without reserving GM's right to amend or terminate those benefits."

The case, according to a DOL spokesman, raises important questions about the validity of benefit plan documents required under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act, in this case the summary plan descriptions provided to GM employees.

Earlier this year, a federal court ruled that GM could not cut the benefits of another 45,000 early retirees who had signed special agreements.

IBT suit rejected

The Teamsters may appeal a federal judge's refusal to delay implementation of a new federal law that ends state regulation of the trucking industry.

While finding that the state pre-emption law may injure employees and small and medium-sized trucking companies, the judge held that Congress was authorized to end state regulation under the commerce clause of the U.S. Constitution.

"This is a bad law that will hurt small businesses and the communities they serve," IBT President Ron Carey said. "People don't want the federal government to get rid of state protections that help them."

The Teamsters had joined with three states in seeking to block the new law, which was passed without debate, hearings or recorded votes in the waning days of the 103rd Congress.

Joining the IBT in the suit were regulatory agencies in Oklahoma, Kansas and Montana and a coalition of motor carriers and shippers.

UMW can be safety agent

Non-union workers at the Kerr-McGee Coal Corp. mines can designate the Mine Workers as their representative during official mine safety inspections, according to a federal court.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia denied review of a Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission decision that said the UMWA fit the definition of "walkaround rights" under the FMSH Amendments Act of 1977.

In 1990, seven miners at Kerr-McGee's Jacobs Ranch Mine in Campbell County, Wyo., designated the UMWA and two of its employees as their representatives during a federal safety inspection.

Kerr-McGee claimed that, given the union's intent to organize the mine, its use of miner representative designation abused the rights and privileges accorded to safety inspectors. Judge Judith Rogers, writing for the court, said, "the fact that the UMWA may seek to gain legitimacy and credibility among Jacobs Ranch miners by educating and assisting them with health and safety issues does not suggest a reason to prevent its participation in the first place."

Courier in flight from reality

Groundless arguments shield UPS, FedEx from NLRA

By David Kameras

The Teamsters say United Parcel Service is trying to duck the National Labor Relations Act by recasting itself as an air carrier even though it relies primarily on trucks.

In testimony presented to the NLRB Dec. 7, the IBT said the carrier's attempt to place itself under the Railway Labor Act would establish a "complete never-never land" that would deny six decades of collective bargaining history.

The IBT has had a relationship with UPS since 1919, and 150,000 workers are currently under contract, IBT attorney Stephen B. Moldof pointed out.

UPS declared in 1993 that it no longer considered itself subject to the NLRB's authority, but that it should answer to the National Mediation Board, which administers the RLA, and would allow it to indefinitely block strikes. Such is the case with Federal Express, the air courier with which it competes, UPS argued.

But a NLRB administrative law judge found last year that some 92 percent of UPS packages travel entirely by ground, hardly the profile of an air carrier.

AFL-CIO General Counsel Laurence Gold suggested that UPS should direct its concerns about ground transport strikes to Congress, not to the NLRB, and warned against the board giving up any of its jurisdiction to the NMB.

Meanwhile, the UAW is trying to organize Federal Express "Liberty District" workers, located in Delaware, southern New Jersey and eastern Pennsylvania, although those efforts could be stymied by the RLA, which prohibits bargaining on an areawide basis.

UAW attorney William T. Josem noted that the targeted workers are engaged in ground transport and pickup of packages, work traditionally falling under the NLRA. Out of 248,000 workers, only 3,000 are involved in airline operations.

The Air Line Pilots organized Federal Express pilots last year, but have yet to reach a first contract agreement.

In other airline industry developments:

- ALPA broke off contract talks with USAir without reaching agreement on a package of concessions to rescue the troubled carrier. Both sides agreed to resume negotiations in January.
- The Teamsters have hammered out a contract with Airborne Freight Corp. restricting to 10 percent by 1998 the amount of the work force filling part-time jobs.
- The Federal Aviation Administration has grounded all ATR planes, similar to the one that crashed in Indiana in November, when flying in icy or potentially icy conditions. The FAA action was prompted by American Eagle pilots who expressed concern about the risks. ALPA defended the position of the pilots, who belong to an unaffiliated union, as "well within the pilot in command's authority."

ALPA said it would "back up 100 percent the decision of its members not to fly in conditions that they feel are unsafe."

- The FAA has proposed requiring training in "cockpit resource management" skills by pilots, copilots, flight engineers, flight attendants and dispatchers involved with the operation of larger aircraft, as well as crew members working aboard commuter craft.
- Flight Attendants have ratified their first contract with American Trans Air, winning an immediate 5 percent wage increase, with further increases annually over the contract's four-year term.

Textile Workers seek ESOP voting rights

By Muriel H. Cooper

Workers who rescued a North American Rayon Corp. (NARC) plant back in 1985 are feeling double-crossed.

Members of the United Textile Workers Locals 2207 and 2614 recently called off their seven-week strike against NARC, which had demanded concessions in bargaining, only to find that they had been "permanently replaced." Only 100 jobs remained after "downsizing," the union was told, with about 600 jobs eliminated.

The union has charged the company with surface bargaining and filed a complaint with the National Labor Relations Board. The battle also will be joined in federal court as workers fight for full voting rights in their Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP).

When the workers voted to participate in the ESOP in 1985, they thought they were forming a partnership with the company and helping provide jobs in their small northeastern Tennessee hometown of Elizabethton, said UTW President Ron Myslowka. But they have since discovered they are far less than full partners.

Today, almost 1,100 hourly employees hold 72 percent of the company shares through the ESOP. However, since the ESOP does not provide for "pass through voting rights," employees cannot exercise their individual share vote. Instead, employee votes are expressed by management, which owns 28 percent of the stock.

"Management doesn't want to share their voting rights," said Myslowka. "As the workers see it, management has to change. They are not willing to implement the spirit of the ESOP."

Unions are justified in demanding a resolution to the problem in collective bargaining, said AFL-CIO economist John Zalusky. "Clearly, this is an unfair circumstance. Management is abusing the intention of the ESOPs. It's like workers giving up wages to buy a car and then being told they can't drive it."

While ESOPs have become more commonplace, especially as a tool for companies to avoid bankruptcy, they can burn workers if structured poorly, the AFL-CIO has warned. "It depends on why it is used, how well it is controlled and who is in charge," said AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Thomas R. Donahue.

"Worker-owners should have full voting rights as stockholders as soon as possible, and they should have representation on the company's board of directors in proportion to their ownership," he said.

A situation similar to the NARC case occurred at the Avondale Shipyard in New Orleans, where workers are protesting a 1985 ESOP that invested their pension assets and left them holding the bag.

At one point, stock that employees bought at more than $30 a share had plummeted to $1 a share.

NLRB ruling favors UMWA over contractors

The Mine Workers won a key victory in the long-running battle with coal companies over the use of contract employees.

In a policy reversal, the National Labor Relations Board regional office in Cincinnati decided that contract and regular employees working at the same mine are entitled to an NLRB election as a single unit.

"This ruling pulls the plug on coal operators and other companies which use the contracting-out shell game to rob workers of their rights," UMWA President Richard L. Trumka said. "It will bolster our efforts to organize the non-union segment of the coal industry."

The case involves the Mountaineer mine operated by the Mingo Logan Coal Co., a subsidiary of Ashland Coal Co., in Mingo County, W.Va. Nearly 200 regular employees work side-by-side with some 100 contract workers employed by two small companies. The workers are supervised by the same regular foremen and perform the same work. The only difference between the two groups is that the contract employees receive lower pay and fewer benefits.

To counter the basic unfairness of the situation, the Mountaineer workers sought UMWA representation and the union began an organizing drive last year.

The ruling, which may yet be challenged before the full NLRB, reverses a 1973 NLRB decision involving maintenance employees working at several locations.

The Mountaineer case illustrates one of the many ways coal operators use contract employees to circumvent union representation. A more common method is for the companies to hire workers through a dummy contract firm to work mines located near, but not on, the same site as a union mine.

GOP's margin in popular vote is razor-thin

Continued from Page 1

Republican. Among those concerned about the economy/jobs, 57 percent voted Democratic and 43 percent Republican.

Crime, trumpeted as a seminal issue during the campaign, was of concern to only 17 percent of the electorate, who split their votes nearly equally among Democrats and Republicans.

Even though the Republicans gained a lot of seats, winning control in both the House and the Senate, their victory was razor-thin nationwide, Gersh noted. There was only a 2 percent change in the popular vote from 1992 to 1994.

Historically, when one party scores major gains during an election, the other party usually comes right back with comparable gains in the next election, he added.

The fragility of the Republican advantage could be seen in Washington state, where Democrats lost six House seats even though 65,000 more people voted for Democratic candidates. ''Those marginal losses could be turned into victories if Democratic voters are mobilized,'' Gersh said.

The religious right ''made a huge difference'' in mobilizing voters for Republican candidates in Tennessee, where 10 percent more people voted in 1994 than in the previous off-year election, Gersh said. ''They were responsible for the loss of (Sen. Jim) Sasser.''

Conversely, get-out-the-vote efforts by labor, civil rights and women's groups were primarily responsible for Sen. Chuck Robb's victory over Republican Oliver North in Virginia, he noted. Unions also led the charge for Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D), as one of labor's best friends turned back a stiff challenge in Massachusetts.

Kirkland credited efforts by the Committee on Political Education with staunching the bleeding, noting that exit polls showed only a slight falloff in voting by union households. He termed that ''no mean achievement'' given the overall climate of the election year.

Union households, referring to voters who have any union members in their families, voted 61 percent to 39 percent for Democratic candidates, a bit below the usual 63-37 split and down from the 67 percent voting Democratic in 1992. Union households made up about one-quarter of the electorate, according to a New York Times survey.

But union members clearly abandoned several endorsed candidates, including the Democratic opponents of Republican governors in Massachusetts and Ohio. In New York, Mario Cuomo got only 51 percent of the union household vote, contributing to his defeat.

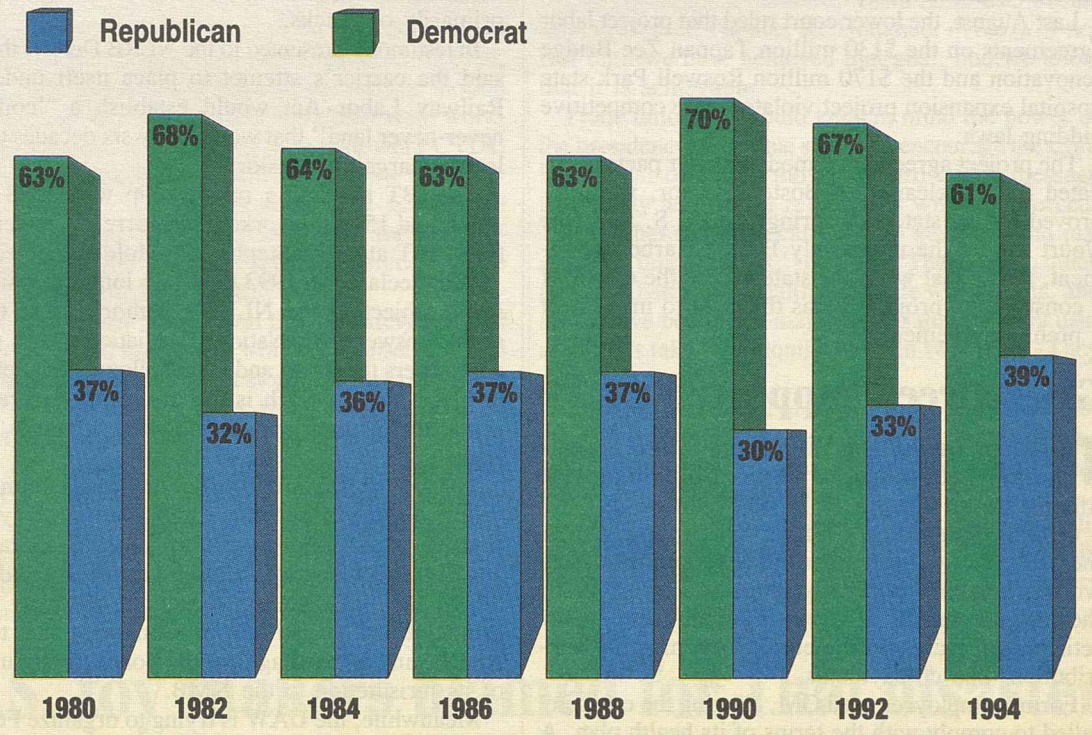
''By and large, with an intense effort, we were able to get our members involved in this election,'' said COPE Director Richard Walsh. That effort included some 285 full-time political activists, mostly from affiliated unions, who fanned out across the country to participate in the AFL-CIO-led campaign.

A major lesson learned from the campaign, Walsh said, is that those cooperative efforts must continue year round. ''We need more communication between state and local central bodies and local unions, and we need more involvement at the local union level. We will consider added field staff and improve our one-on-one training, but we must improve our political contact at the work site.''

Walsh and Legislative Director Robert M. McGlotten appeared together to analyze the 104th Congress for the two committees.

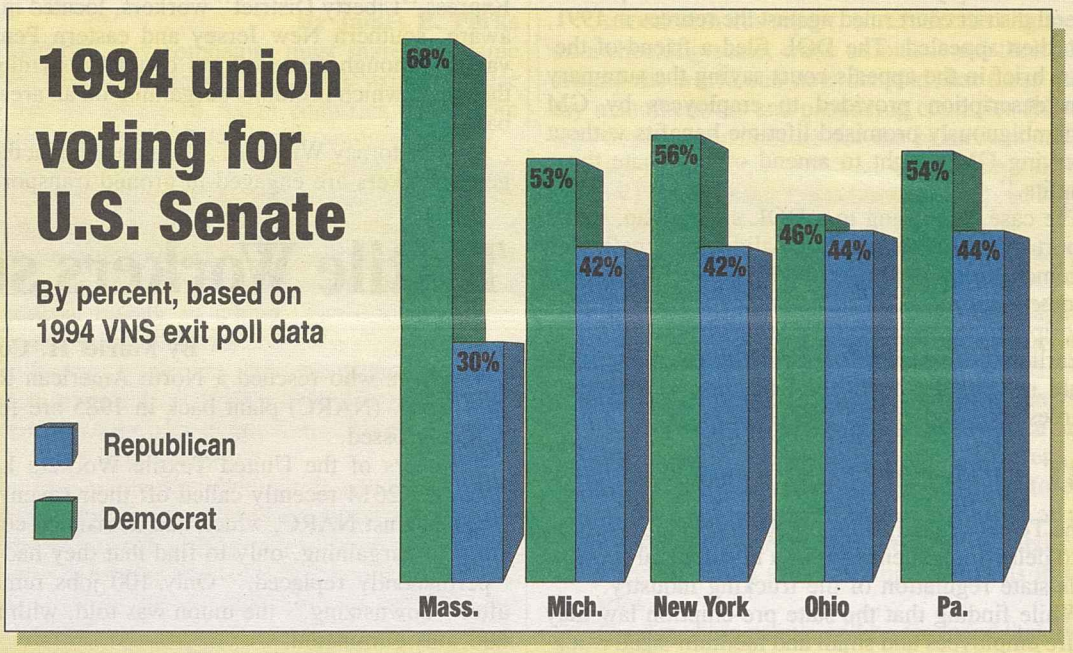
Union household voting (U.S. House)

By percent, based on exit data from three major polls (1990 data from COPE poll)



1994 union voting for U.S. Senate

By percent, based on 1994 VNS exit poll data



Source: National Committee for an Effective Congress

AFL-CIO NEWSGRAFIC

States to be combat zones for guarding worker rights

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

State legislators will make attacks on worker rights the norm for 1995 as a result of drastic election changes, AFL-CIO Executive Council committees were told.

''Unions and all working Americans will likely see broad-scale attacks on basic state labor laws, serious efforts at passing 'right to work' and new efforts at crippling organized labor,'' AFL-CIO organizing director Joe Shantz told the joint meeting of the Political Work and Legislative Priorities committees.

Shantz explained that a preliminary survey of 41 state federations indicates that legislative initiatives against worker rights also can be expected in public employee collective bargaining, Davis-Bacon, workers' compensation, prison labor, privatization and drug testing.

Overall, the state federations' reports indicate that:

- Twenty-seven states expect to see continued efforts to weaken state workers' compensation.
- Eleven of 20 states responding that have full public employee collective bargaining laws expect efforts to repeal or substantially weaken them.
- Half of the states, 16 of the 32, that have prevailing wage (little Davis-Bacon) laws expect efforts to repeal or weaken them.
- One-third anticipate attempts to legalize or liberalize the use of prison labor.
- 40 percent of the states expect initiatives to privatize state functions and programs.

Meanwhile, a right-to-work ''watch list'' includes Oklahoma, Montana, New Hampshire, Michigan and New Mexico. Shantz considers the threat critical in Montana and Oklahoma. Oklahoma's new Republican governor, Donald Keating, is expected to lead an effort to get the issue on the ballot if it cannot be achieved directly by the legislature.

Even where right-to-work bills are not introduced in states where Republicans have just gained control, workers will be faced with issues like Beck legislation for public employees. These states include Ohio, Illinois, Wisconsin, Indiana, Oregon and Pennsylvania.

In addition, House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) has promised less regulation and mandates from the federal government to state legislatures. Such an action could leave worker safety and health, job training and education needs starved for funds.

Republicans made gains in 45 of 46 states that held elections. The GOP now controls 30 governorships and both chambers of the state legislature in 16 states. Democrats control 19 governorships and both legislative chambers in only eight states. Not since the Eisenhower era in 1956 have the Democrats controlled so few state chambers.

The GOP now controls 25 state senates and 23 state houses. The Democrats control 24 state houses and senates. California and Nevada state houses are tied.

Clergy stands with workers in Decatur fight

By James B. Parks

Six national religious leaders have joined clergy from Decatur, Ill., in an effort to gain social and economic justice for workers in a town torn by strikes and lockouts at three multinational companies.

The group is circulating a letter seeking an end to the lockout of some 760 Paperworkers at A.E. Staley Manufacturing. The letter will be released Jan. 26 at a stockholders meeting of Staley's parent, Tate & Lyle PLC, in London.

The letter is another in a series of actions by the religious community to draw attention to the moral and ethical issues raised by the disputes at the three companies in Decatur.

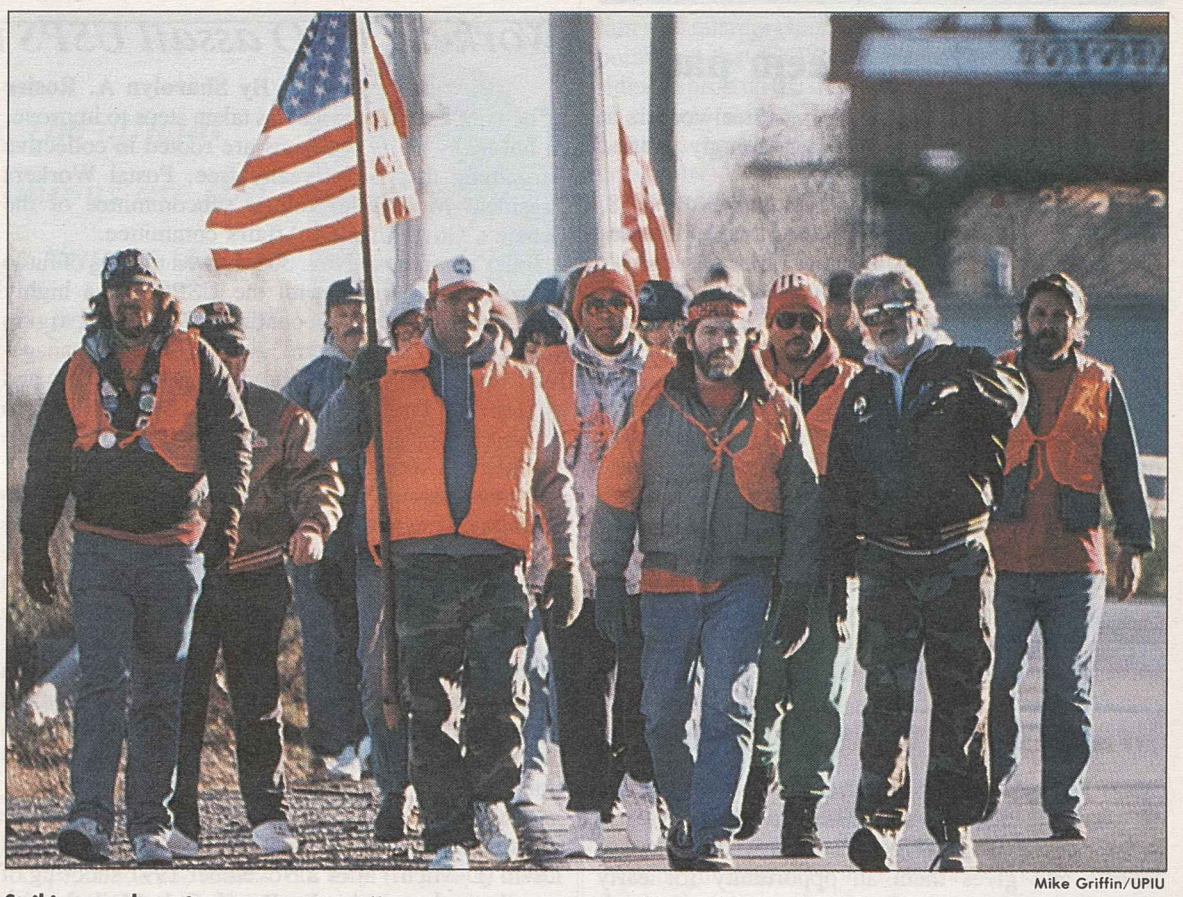
Several Decatur ministers have participated in marches and demonstrations or have been arrested for their support of workers who they believe have been wronged by greedy corporations. ''I believe Jesus would appear more often in union halls than in boardrooms of multinational companies because Jesus identified with those less powerful,'' said the Rev. Martin Mangan, pastor of St. James Catholic Church in Decatur.

That same spirit was reflected in the generosity and solidarity of workers during the holiday season, said UAW spokesman Roger Kerson. ''There was good solidarity among the unions. People, many of whom were on strike themselves, shared what they could with their brother and sister union members. There were donations from around the town. It really was a merry Christmas.''

The UPIU members, formerly Allied Industrial Workers, have been locked out at Staley for 19 months. About 2,000 UAW members walked out at the local Caterpillar plant in June and 1,200 Rubber Workers struck Bridgestone/Firestone in July.

There are about 5,000 URW members on strike nationwide at Bridgestone/Firestone and Pirelli Armstrong in what has become the union's longest strike, surpassing a 141-day strike in 1976. The nationwide Caterpillar strike involves some 14,000 UAW members.

The UPIU also is expanding its campaign outside Decatur. Union members have written Coca-Cola and Pepsi Cola, asking them not to renew their contracts with Staley for corn syrup.



Mike Griffin/UPIU

Striking workers from Decatur, Ill., march on Springfield to demand government intervention.

In the URW strike, Bridgestone/Firestone notified the union Jan. 4 that ''a large number of associates have been permanently replaced at several of the locations being struck.''

The union was not consulted about the move, which came just a few days before the union planned to meet with federal mediators in an effort to resume negotiations and end the work stoppage.

The URW, in a statement, said, ''It is clear that Bridgestone/Firestone deliberately timed this action to disrupt and thwart'' the efforts of the union, and promised to continue to work with mediators while seeking redress in the courts and with the National Labor Relations Board.

On another front, the URW gained a federal court ruling that Pirelli Armstrong could not unilaterally terminate the health care benefits of retirees. The union filed suit after the company said it would end benefits for 3,200 retirees and surviving spouses 90 days after the previous contract expired July 15, 1994.

At Caterpillar, the strike is taking a serious toll on production. A respected industry newsletter, Stark's Off-Highway Ledger, reported that daily vehicle production at struck Cat plants in East Peoria, Aurora and Decatur was down nearly a third in the last quarter of 1994. The three plants are the major final assembly locations affected by the UAW strike.

''This production data shows what happens to a company that attempts to replace its skilled and experienced work force,'' said UAW Secretary-Treasurer Bill Casstevens, who heads the union's Caterpillar department. ''You can't keep up quality and quantity production when your best people are out on the street.''

Meanwhile, Illinois Gov. James Edgar (R) sidestepped a request by local leaders of striking unions to intervene in the three disputes. The newly re-elected governor made no commitments during a Dec. 9 meeting, even on the basic issue of allowing shelters by state roads as protection against the harsh winter weather. He appointed a top aide as labor liaison to the workers.

Amtrak to derail 4,600 union jobs, slash service

By David Kameras

Rail labor deplored the announcement by Amtrak, one week before Christmas, of its intention to eliminate some 5,500 jobs, 4,600 of them union, to appease the ''take-no-prisoners'' budget mentality currently permeating Washington.

The cuts, which are due to begin in February, will affect the memberships of 13 unions and 36 percent of Amtrak's current organized work force.

United Transportation Union President G. Thomas DuBose noted the adverse effect on families. ''You are talking about a lot of jobs here, and there aren't that many good middle-class jobs left,'' he said.

Amtrak also proposed eliminating several long-standing routes, including those linking Chicago to Milwaukee, Toledo to Detroit, San Jose to Sacramento and Washington to Montreal. And severe cutbacks are planned for such popular runs as Chicago to Los Angeles, New York to New Orleans and New York to Miami.

The cuts anticipate reduction or elimination of federal subsidies as the newly elected Republican Congress assumes power. Yet between 1982 and 1991, adjusted government spending on Amtrak went down 36 percent.

''It would be a catastrophic mistake for the government to sacrifice Amtrak as one of the first victims of deficit reduction,'' said Transportation Communications Union President Bob Scardelletti, who called the carrier's action ''an unfortunate response to woefully inadequate federal funding.''

''Amtrak doesn't have much choice when it's about to run out of money and Congress has made it clear that it couldn't come back for a supplemental appropriation,'' he said. ''But that doesn't make it any easier for the thousands of rail workers who will lose their jobs and the communities and riders that will lose train service.''

TCU has called for a diversion of one cent from the existing 18.4 cents per gallon federal highway tax, which it says would cure Amtrak's funding problems and eliminate the need for other federal subsidies.

The New Year rings in other challenges for rail workers, including a judicial fight over bargaining. Many of the nation's largest freight railroads are trying to morph themselves into a 6-million-pound gorilla instead of bargaining separately with the unions.

When the Maintenance of Way Employees announced in October its intention to approach each employer individually, the National Railway Labor Conference, representing eight major carriers and 21 smaller railroads, took the workers to court to try to force their acceptance of multiemployer bargaining.

BMWE and the Locomotive Engineers responded with suits of their own, rejecting the notion that unions must bargain nationally. Such bargaining could allow carriers to ''manipulate the process,'' pointed out William A. Bon, BMWE's general counsel.

In letters to its targeted carriers, a ''surprised and disappointed'' BLE President Ronald P. McLaughlin charged that the carriers ''have taken the position that only the carriers have the right, under the Railway Labor Act, to determine how — and under what conditions — bargaining must take place.''

McLaughlin said his union's members ''are furious at the continued lack of respect and appreciation the carriers have for their engineers by asking them to take a further cut in wages, especially in light of the record profits the railroads are reporting.'' He warned the carriers that if they intend to play hardball during the negotiations, ''you will find us a formidable adversary.''

Both unions maintain forcing them to bargain individually violates the RLA, citing a provision that representatives ''shall be designated by the respective parties without interference, influence or coercion by either party over the designation of representatives by the other.''

The Chicago and Northwestern and Norfolk Southern have gone so far as to claim that they aren't really railroads in their attempt to find a legal loophole through which they hope to escape applicability of the RLA.

''The carriers are nearly hysterical in this attempt to protract negotiations,'' said BMWE President Mac A. Fleming.

''The fact the railroads have sued to force us into national handling demonstrates their desire to give us less than we deserve economically,'' he said. ''But the litigation will not delay negotiations even one minute. The carriers have no legal basis to stall negotiations.''

Despite the litigation, BMWE intends to proceed with contract talks.

''We will tolerate no tricks, no delays, nothing but hard, fast-paced, good-faith bargaining between us and the railroads,'' Fleming said.

Meanwhile, the Federal Railway Administration has denied a UTU request to block the Wheeling and Lake Erie Railway's use of ''black boxes,'' remote control devices to operate unmanned locomotives in train yards.

BARGAINING

USWA in first Rheem pact

After fighting four years, the new Steelworkers at Rheem Manufacturing overwhelmingly ratified their first contract.

The three-year agreement, which expires Dec. 18, 1997, includes a $200 signing bonus, wage increases totaling 90 cents an hour over the life of the contract and improvements in insurance benefits.

"This is something that could have been accomplished long ago if the company had not resisted the will of the workers," said Joe L. Kiker, director of USWA District 25 and chair of the negotiating committee. "Now that we have reached this point, our hope and goal is for a long-term mutually beneficial relationship."

USWA Local 9326 got the new members in 1990 when 520 of the 940 workers at the plant in Midgeville, Ga., voted for the union. But the company refused to negotiate until July 1994 when a federal appeals court ordered it to recognize the union and to begin bargaining.

Brach agreement is sweet

The Teamsters approved a new four-year contract with the E.J. Brach Corp. that protects long-term workers at its Westside plant in Chicago from unfair layoffs and gives them an opportunity for early retirement.

The union beat back a scheme by the candy maker to create two tiers of employees doing the same work with widely different wages. "We won on the key issue by not letting Brach replace good jobs that paid decent wages with nickel-and-dime jobs," IBT President Ron Carey said. "Now we're going to continue the fight to keep this plant in Chicago."

The new contract includes new language on severance, plantwide seniority rights in layoffs and longer recall rights. The settlement also includes wage increases in the last two years, higher company contributions to the pension fund and a new "30-and-out" pension rule that could benefit as many as 800 employees in the next three years. IBT Local 738 represents some 2,000 workers at the plant.

Guild, AFTRA in TV pacts

The Writers Guild and the Television and Radio Artists reached separate tentative agreements with the television networks on new contracts.

The WGA pact was the first negotiated with the networks under the Contract Adjustment Committee (CAC) process begun three years ago. The CAC comprises negotiators from the WGA, the three major networks and the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP), which includes Fox Television.

Negotiations are continuing between the CAC and the AMPTP, which is not included in the tentative pact. The WGA agreement includes rates of payment for reuse of literary material in interactive programs and improved compensation for writers.

AFTRA's three-year tentative agreement with the networks and the AMPTP would cover some 75,000 performers on daytime soaps, game shows, late-night talk shows and syndicated programs.

Other contracts affecting network news staffs and network radio codes are still being negotiated.

UAW, Freightliner agree

The UAW approved a new three-year contract that provides higher wages and better health benefits for the 2,200 workers at the Freightliner plant in Mount Holly, N.C.

The new contract includes a $1 per hour wage increase in the first year, followed by 50-cent raises and cost-of-living adjustments during the next two years for employees at the top pay scales.

Under the contract, employees will have a new point-of-service health plan added to existing plans. The new plan offers lower cost coverage. The company also will set up a trust fund to pay for health-care premiums of workers who retire on or after Jan. 1, 1995. The trust will be financed by a four-cent-per-hour contribution from wages.

The agreement also adds a paid holiday; gives each employee a $350 signing bonus; increases overtime pay and increases the amount of sick leave.

Freightliner is wholly owned by Mercedes-Benz.

Biller calls for right to strike

Workers, GAO assail USPS top-down management style

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

The U.S. Postal Service has taken steps to improve, but many of its problems are rooted in collective bargaining that is not really free, Postal Workers President Moe Biller told a subcommittee of the Senate's Governmental Affairs committee.

Biller's testimony Nov. 30 followed months of futile contract negotiations with the USPS and a highly critical Government Accounting Office report urging an end to the "us vs. them" attitude between management and labor. The APWU, the Letter Carriers and the Mail Handlers division of the Laborers all had to resort to arbitration after the USPS demanded wage freezes and cutbacks, among other concessions.

"It is apparent," said Biller, "that management intends to rely again on interest arbitration to try to accomplish what it cannot do by collective bargaining. Postal workers should be given the right to strike to respond to these tactics."

Also testifying was Postmaster General Marvin T. Runyon, who proposed a summit meeting between management and labor. But pointing to the fruitless contract negotiations, NALC President Vincent Sombrotto said, "It's a little late in the day for negotiations."

The GAO report was requested by subcommittee chairman Sen. David Pryor (D-Ark.) and Sen. Carl Levin (D-Mich.) after a November 1991 shooting of postal employees in the Royal Oak Mail Service Center in Royal Oak, Mich., and other incidents of workplace violence at postal facilities.

The report, "U.S. Postal Service: Labor-Management Problems Persist on the Workroom Floor," said that labor and management share in the responsibility for some success in labor-management relations over the past several years, but said it was limited.

Working with union and management association leaders, Runyon began in July 1992 to implement several initiatives to help build a labor-management partnership at the national level and make USPS more friendly to customers and employees, the report said.

But while the new national leadership structures and management reward systems are good first steps, "no clear framework or strategy exists for moving agreed-upon values and principles down to first-line supervisors and employees working at processing plants and post offices," the GAO noted.

Mail Handlers President William H. Quinn told the subcommittee that the top-down management style persists because "training of supervisors in human relations and interpersonal skills is a low priority for the Postal Service, and there is little, if any, attempt to rate supervisors based on their treatment of craft employees." Moving the mail out, no matter what, is the only standard, Quinn said.

"Overall, labor-management problems are long-standing and have multiple causes that are related to the autocratic management style, adversarial employee and union attitudes and inappropriate and inadequate performance management systems," the report explained.

GAO noted that, in FY 1993, 51,827 postal worker grievances were not settled at the lower steps of the grievance procedure and were appealed to the third step. That means about one in 12 bargaining unit employees had problems that could not be resolved in their workplace.

In his testimony, Biller noted that "the autocratic bureaucracy stifles creativity and initiative, saps the energy from dedication and ultimately discourages and demoralizes individual spirit. And when you compromise creativity, initiative, dedication and the spirit of your work force, you lose excellence."

But Biller took issue with GAO's recommendations for a two-year experiment with new ways to resolve disputes or, failing that, a change in the 1970 law that established the Postal Service and gave workers the right to bargain collectively.

"GAO went beyond its charter in recommending specific changes to collective bargaining agreements," Biller said.

The GAO said the parties need to agree on a framework for creating a work environment that minimizes the negative dynamic between supervisors and employees. It recommended that the postal unions and management associations develop a 10-year agreement for changing the workroom climate of both processing and delivery functions.

Such an agreement should provide incentives that encourage teamwork and give employees greater responsibility and accountability for work results, it said. GAO recommended that the parties test new approaches at pilot sites and evaluate their impact on employee and customer satisfaction.

During contract negotiations, the NALC submitted — and the Postal Service rejected — putting the GAO's recommendations into contract language, said Drew Von Bergen, NALC director of public relations.

Disney workers win four-year pact

By James B. Parks

Snow White, Mickey Mouse and Goofy celebrated Christmas by beating back the Grinch at Walt Disney World.

After rejecting three other proposed contracts, the members of six unions, bargaining as the Services Trade Council, overwhelmingly approved a new four-year contract covering some 18,500 workers at Walt Disney World in Lake Buena Vista, Fla.

The new contract provides a 14 percent wage increase, job security and new health care options. Employees not only will have the right to refuse unsafe work, but will participate in a new joint labor-management health and safety committee and receive paid time off for health and safety training.

"This just proves that even in the Magic Kingdom, workers need a strong union to make sure they're treated fairly," said Teamsters President Ron Carey. The Disney World characters are represented by IBT Local 385.

The initial wage increase of 3 percent is retroactive to Oct. 30, the expiration date of the previous contract, with increases of 3 percent this year and 4 percent each in 1996 and 1997. The night shift premium also increases from 40 cents per hour to 50 cents effective in April. Under the prior contract the average hourly wage was about $7.50.

The pact, ratified Dec. 16, contains improvements in health care, said STC spokesman Mike Duffy of the Service Employees.

The contract expands employees' health care options to include both an HMO and a preferred provider system, as well as the existing plan. Two of the plans do not carry deductibles, which will result in big out-of-pocket savings, the IBT said. Under the old contract, 83 percent of workers never met their deductibles, forcing them to bear most of the expenses themselves. Employees also will receive free vision care under the new agreement.



IBT photo

Minnie Mouse, a Teamster, joined fellow workers in celebrating the new contract.

Another major gain was a guarantee that full-time workers would receive 35 hours of work each week instead of the 30 in the previous contract, Duffy said. The agreement maintains current language allowing Disney to subcontract out 10 percent of bargaining unit work, but requiring the company to find new positions for persons laid off as a result of the contracting out.

Besides IBT and SEIU, the unions represented by STC include Food and Commercial Workers, Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees, Transportation Communications Union and Theatrical Stage Employees.

Old guard stymies unionists in China, Russia

By Michael Byrne

The Cold War may have receded but the institutions used to shackle workers under Communist regimes are flourishing. While the situations are quite different in Russia and China, they pose very similar dilemmas for workers in those countries and for the western trade unionists who seek to help them.

The problem was addressed last month in Brussels, where Chinese labor activist Han Dongfang pleaded with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) to continue its refusal to have any contact with the official unions of the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU).

''There has been no sign of change by the ACFTU,'' Han said. ''They are still acting as a tool of government and not as a representative of the workers.''

The ICFTU agreed to continue its ban on contact with the ACFTU, but not before union representatives from several Asian countries argued that union-to-union contact should be encouraged. Han was discouraged as well with the argument put forth by some western unions that ''our governments and businesses are doing business in China, and maybe we should be doing business there as well.''

''This argument shows ignorance about what is going on in China,'' Han told a group of U.S. unionists in Washington. ''I think it shows a cynical disregard for real workers' rights.''

Forced labor in factories

Han described ''the worst kind of industrial conditions — workers forced to work overtime, maybe 70 hours a week. We know of some cases where workers have had to work 72 hours straight without a break during peak periods.''

''Some women workers are forced into a kind of bonded labor,'' he said. ''Many young women from the countryside must bribe their way to get a job, and then spend the next year working without pay in order to pay off their debt. They are locked up in the factories and locked up in their dormitories. Management withholds their ID papers, so they can't leave.''

The official unions not only do not speak out for the workers, but they are an essential part of the system that represses them, Han said. ''The government defines how the union should operate and requires that union officers be Communist Party functionaries.''

Scores more have been arrested and held without trial since the U.S. government extended most-favored-nation status to China in May 1994 and announced the ''delinking'' between trade and human rights. Those arrested include Han's close friend Chou Kuochang. He and 13 others were arrested for signing a declaration calling for workers to organize independent trade unions.

''The official unions are still acting as a tool of government.''

— Han Dongfang



Han, who helped organize the first independent trade union in China during the 1989 Tiananmen Square movement, has been refused readmittance to that country since he sought medical help in the United States. He was deliberately exposed to tuberculosis during two years in the Chinese ''education-through-labor'' prison system.

The Russian experience

In post-Soviet Russia, workers can legally organize independent trade unions, but they are greatly disadvantaged since the official unions still retain the power and assets conferred by the government as a means to control the workers. Officials of the so-called Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia (FNPR) still are part of management at the factories, where workers pay dues to the official union through checkoff.

''In the old days, the factories were run by three individuals — a government supervisor, a Communist Party representative and an FNPR official,'' said Boris Batarchuk, editor of Delo, a weekly newspaper that covers industrial relations and the free trade union movement. ''Now, they are run by two people — one representing the government and the other from the official union.''

While many Russian workers are owed for months of back pay, these plant managers are enjoying vacations and limousine service, Batarchuk said. ''The workers know that FNPR does not represent them. That's why fewer than 800,000 showed up when leaders of the official trade union tried to organize a nationwide protest over the back-pay issue, although they claimed that millions demonstrated.''

Batarchuk once edited Prolog, the official newspaper of FNPR, but now crusades against the corruption and misrepresentation of the official unions. He points out that FNPR is lobbying for increased subsidies to prop up the unprofitable factories, in the spirit of the old Soviet system, while democratic trade unionists are pushing for market reforms to help create good jobs.

''The official trade union leaders have more in common with government officials than with workers,'' Batarchuk said. ''They are members of the nomenklatura, lobbyists for the status quo. For there to be real change in Russia, this system must be broken down.''

Seeking strength from center

Few understand the shortcomings of the Russian apparat as well as Sergey Belyev, a labor lawyer who chairs the Comradeship of Free Trade Unions of Ekaterinburg, an industrial town in the Ural Mountains that is the home of Russian President Boris Yeltsin. Belyev criticizes Yeltsin's government for helping the FNPR deny democratic unions access to the Russian Trilateral Committee, which was established to bring government, business and labor together.

''Russian workers cannot rely on the government or the courts now,'' Belyev said. ''They must push for democracy in the workplaces.''

Belyev's lament is that government and official union apparatchiks are chipping away at worker protections guaranteed by the new constitution. ''The official unions recognize that the democratic trade union movement threatens their position, and they have been successful in convincing the Duma (lower house of Parliament) to change the law.''

Belyev's organization is a regional sector of Sotsprof, a loose federation of professional and small enterprise-based trade unions. He has mounted a campaign within that organization to join with independent trade unions in other sectors to form a central federation, a move opposed by the national leadership of Sotsprof.

''Democratic trade unions must join together if we are to have a chance for progress,'' he said. ''Otherwise, we will be strangled by the system.''

The strongest supporters of a national trade union center are the Independent Mine Workers (NPG) and their president, Alexander Sergeev. The miners are allied with unions representing air traffic controllers, pilots, locomotive engineers, seafarers and some elements of Sotsprof.

''The question is not if there should be a labor center, but when,'' said Scott Reynolds, who directs the Moscow office of the AFL-CIO Free Trade Union Institute. ''But the free trade unionists in Russia are in an uphill struggle.''

'Come Shop' puts corporate greed in perspective

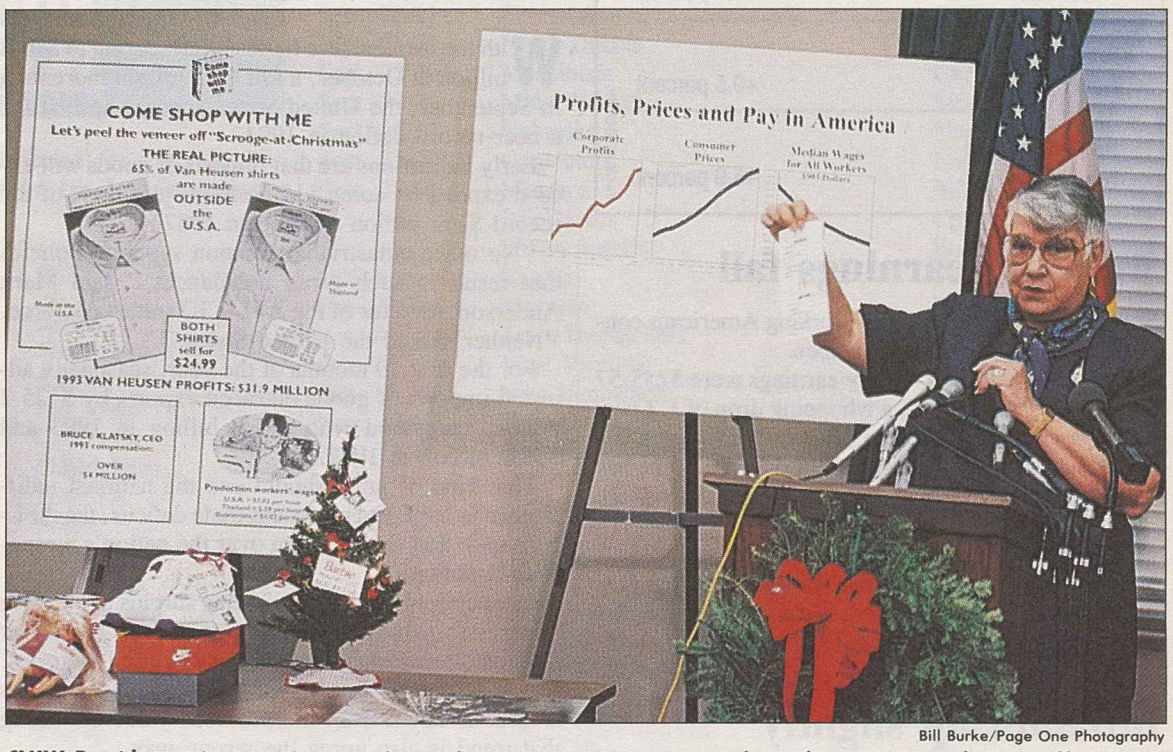
Labor and consumer allies joined Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-Ohio) over the holidays to launch a ''Come Shop With Me'' campaign to encourage Buy American as the best way to invest in communities and the future of the country.

The campaign looks at a variety of imported goods and asks consumers to compare the product, the price and the potential profit with the same items made by American workers.

Many well-known, brand-named products sold in the United States are made abroad, many times by women and children who are paid substandard wages and working under harsh conditions. Meanwhile, companies may have shut down U.S. plants to set up shop overseas.

''On most consumer items. . . shoppers have a choice between comparably priced goods made in the U.S.A. and those produced offshore,'' said AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland. ''Contrary to popular myth, it is the importer or retailer — and not the consumer — who profits from the shamefully low wages and deplorable working conditions at the offshore factories where many imported goods are made.''

Joining Kaptur at the news conference were Gloria Johnson, president of the Coalition of Labor Union Women; Evelyn Dubrow, vice president of the Ladies' Garment Workers; Linda Golodner, executive director of the National Consumer League; and Cheryl Graeve, director of Frontlash, the AFL-CIO youth organization.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

CLUW President Gloria Johnson shows how consumers pay and workers are made to suffer.

''This campaign will take away the cloak of secrecy that surrounds the billions of dollars in profits being made by a few at the expense of many,'' said Kaptur. ''Those making the profits are the globe-trotting corporations that call themselves 'American' or multinational, but actually manufacture the majority of their goods in low-wage, undemocratic nations and then send them back here for sale at exorbitant prices.''

''Imports are not necessarily a bargain for the American consumer,'' said Johnson, who pointed to the worldwide exploitation of women and children.

''American people have compassion for children,'' said Golodner, who co-chairs the Child Labor Coalition. ''When provided an option, they prefer to buy products made without child labor.''

DATA

Merchandise trade deficit

In billions of U.S. dollars



The U.S. merchandise trade deficit is expected to reach $150 billion in 1994 after October's shortfall surged to $16.8 billion. While combining the surplus in services brings the overall trade deficit to $10.1 billion, that figure is the highest on record. The trade surplus in services over the first 10 months of the year has declined from the same period in 1993.

Merchandise trade deficit	
October	$16.8 billion
September	$15.1 billion
Real weekly earnings	
November	-1.3 percent
Consumer prices (CPI-W)	
November	+0.3 percent
Producer prices	
November	+0.5 percent
Housing starts	
November	+6.9 percent

AFL-CIO NEWSGRAFIC

Workers' earnings fall

The real weekly earnings of working Americans continued to plunge in November.

Seasonally adjusted weekly earnings were $255.57 in constant 1982 dollars, a whopping drop of 1.3 percent from the month before. This fall reflected a 0.2 percent decrease in hourly earnings and 0.9 percent decline in weekly hours, coupled with an inflation rate of 0.3 percent.

Compared with the same month last year, unadjusted average weekly earnings were up a tiny 0.1 percent. Over a 15-year period, earnings have eroded 10.7 percent.

Inflation up slightly

Inflation remained well under control in November, as consumer prices rose a modest 0.3 percent on a seasonally adjusted basis. While this is a greater increase than preceding months, it comprises a modest rate over the year of 2.7 percent.

Most of the increase was due to higher energy prices. Gas and electricity charges rose a substantial 0.9 percent, gasoline was up 0.6 percent and fuel oil increased 0.1 percent. Used car prices advanced 1.4 percent, 6.5 percent over a year ago.

U.S. jobs may sink with peso

Mexican currency crisis shows basic flaw in NAFTA

By David Kameras

A 30 percent devaluation of the peso has sent Mexico's economy spiraling into collapse and has shattered the illusions of impending prosperity created by the year-old North American Free Trade Agreement.

With U.S. products now costing much more south of the border, Mexican consumers, many of them already at or near poverty levels, will be unable to create a market for U.S. exports.

Mexican wages, already a fraction of those earned by U.S. workers, effectively have been cut by almost a third, while the Mexican government has announced that future wage increases will be capped at 7 percent.

"The peso devaluation has already more than wiped out any advantages the United States was supposed to gain from tariff elimination over the next 15 years," said AFL-CIO economist Greg Woodhead, who in May 1993 warned Congress that the inevitable collapse of the overvalued peso would apply downward pressure on wages in both countries and create additional incentives for U.S. companies to relocate to Mexico.

In 1993, total hourly compensation for production workers in the maquiladora zone, which is dominated by U.S. manufacturers, averaged $1.75 at the then-existing exchange rate, compared with $16.79 for U.S. workers. Even with wage increases of roughly 10 percent that have taken place since then, U.S. companies now can hire Mexican workers for $1.20 an hour, including wages and benefits.

One result will be greater pressure on illegal immigration, as desperate Mexican workers head north to work at or below the minimum wage and convert their newly earned dollars into pesos, Woodhead said.

Ironically, the collapse of the peso took place after U.S. trade with Mexico, historically a surplus for the United States, changed to an $89 million deficit in October, 10 months into the NAFTA period. Continued deficits now are certain in the coming year.

While the crisis in Mexico should serve as a dramatic warning against expanding NAFTA, the Clinton administration is pushing ahead with plans to bring Chile into the agreement, a prospect opposed by worker organizations in both countries.

Talks are taking place over the first five months of the year, after which the administration is likely to seek "fast-track" authority, which precludes Congress from amending a trade agreement before voting on it.

In a joint statement, Chile's Central Unitaria de Trabajadores (CUT) and the AFL-CIO regretted the decision of the two governments to negotiate a new trade arrangement through the expansion of the flawed NAFTA.

"We have argued for months for a bilateral agreement that could set new standards for decency in trade matters in a way that the interests of the companies would not be above the internationally recognized labor rights of the workers," the statement said.

A U.S.-Chile treaty could "bring opportunities to include social clauses in the principal text of the treaty" and help to assure sustainable development through standards to protect the environment and natural resources, the labor federations said.

In a December 7 letter to President Clinton, House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt (D-Mo.) said, "We must not accept the NAFTA agreements in these important areas as the ceiling of our efforts."

Meanwhile, the General Accounting Office, while complimenting the speed with which the Labor Department is processing claims under the NAFTA-Transitional Adjustment Assistance program, said improvements are needed in covering workers indirectly losing their jobs because of the pact. "Limited guidance, unclear authority and a slow and cumbersome funding mechanism may make it difficult for such workers to access benefits," the agency said.

GAO also reported that restrictions tying cash benefits to training have resulted in some workers receiving incomplete assessments and remedial assistance, as well as a limited mix of services. Further, the Labor Department has failed to address such shortcomings as lack of ongoing support, follow-up and performance monitoring.

The AFL-CIO Human Resources Development Institute has developed a brochure to provide workers with information on NAFTA-TAA eligibility, available services and filing procedures. To order copies of "A Workers Guide to the NAFTA-Transitional Adjustment Assistance Program," contact 202/638-3912.

Widening trade deficit nears record

By David Kameras

With the merchandise trade deficit soaring to $16.8 billion in October, a full $1.6 billion more than in September, the United States appears headed for a near-record deficit in 1994.

Early indications are that imports of goods will exceed exports by some $150 billion, just short of the record $152 billion reached in 1987.

"No other industrialized nation supports policies that result in such gross imbalances," said Mark Anderson, director of the AFL-CIO trade task force. "Neither should the United States."

For the first 10 months of the year, seasonally adjusted imports of goods outraced exports by $125.2 billion, compared with $97.9 billion in 1993 and $68.9 billion in 1992.

That kind of jump should end the national indifference to large and persistent trade deficits, the AFL-CIO said, and renew alarm over the nation's wrong-headed policies.

Just as troubling is the dwindling surplus in the trade in services, which free traders point to as the savior of American workers locked out of closed factories. For the first 10 months of the year, the services surplus is down from the previous year, indicating that trend is also going the wrong way.

From January to October 1994, the trade surplus in services was down a seasonally adjusted $655 million from the year before, contributing to an overall trade deficit of $90.5 billion. The $10.1 billion deficit for October, counting both goods and services, was the second worst on record.

October showed increases in the import of automotive vehicles, parts and engines, capital goods and consumer goods, as well as decreased exports of capital goods.

As usual, Japan led the pack with a $6.7 billion trading surplus with the United States, which contributed to a cumulative 10-month goods trade deficit of $53.9 billion, up from $48.4 billion in the same period of 1993.

However, the goods deficit with China is skyrocketing, hitting $24.6 billion from January to October, compared to $19.4 billion during that time the year before.

Also boosting the deficit numbers is the "free trade partner" to the north, Canada, which from January to October sold the United States $11.1 billion more in goods than it took in, a huge increase over the $8.8 billion deficit chalked up during the same period in 1993.

Part of the imbalance with Canada is attributable to new car imports, which in October outraced exports by $1.8 billion — a figure beginning to approach Japan's new car imbalance of $2.4 billion.

However, while cars made in Canada generally contain a substantial percentage of U.S.-made parts, this is patently not the case with imports from Japan. In addition, Japanese cars made in the United States, which are not reflected in the above figures, involve considerable importation of parts from the Pacific Rim.

At the same time, trade with Mexico, which was supposed to improve dramatically with implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), recorded a deficit of $89 million in October.

The recent 30 percent devaluation of the peso is a reminder of the danger in linking the U.S. economy too closely with its neighbor south of the border. The peso devaluation will result in a trade deficit with Mexico in 1995.

NEWSMAKERS

Peggy Taylor has been named director of the AFL-CIO Department of Legislation. Taylor will succeed **Robert M. McGlotten,** who will leave the position March 1. In announcing the appointment, AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland praised McGlotten's 28 years of service in a variety of civil rights, job training and human services posts and described "the federation's good fortune" in having a person of Taylor's exceptional abilities to provide continuity. Taylor, 50, joined the department in 1979 as a budget and appropriations specialist and was promoted to associate director in 1986. She has worked for the Labor Department as an employment and training specialist and on Capitol Hill as a congressional fellow. She served on the Senate labor subcommittee staff from 1973-1976. McGlotten, 56, has been legislative director since 1986 and a member of the AFL-CIO staff since 1967.



Peggy Taylor

The Theatrical Stage Employees elected Secretary-Treasurer **Thomas C. Short** president after accepting **Alfred DiTolla's** resignation from the post. DiTolla cited health reasons for his leaving and died shortly after his resignation (**See obituary, below**). IATSE Vice President **Michael W. Proscia** will fill Short's position and **Ben Lowe,** business representative of Local 477, was elected vice president.

Sidney Hannah was elected president of the Alabama AFL-CIO to complete the unexpired term of **James Albright,** who died in office in November. Hannah spent 30 years as a Rubber Worker and also served as president of the West Alabama Labor Council.

President Clinton appointed Steelworkers President **George Becker** and Electrical Workers President **John J. Barry** to serve on the Export Council. The newly established council within the Commerce Department will advise the president on "matters related to export performance and to encourage export expansion."

The president also appointed Teamsters' General Counsel **Judith A. Scott** to the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation's Advisory Committee. Scott is a former Mine Workers counsel. The committee focuses on PBGC's investments, regulations and insurance program for employer-sponsored defined benefit pension plans.

John C. Truesdale, whose ties with the National Labor Relations Board date from 1948, has been given a recess appointment by President Clinton. He was a board member during the Carter administration and served a previous recess appointment stint while the board awaited Senate confirmation of current Chairman **William B. Gould.** Truesdale replaces **Dennis M. Devaney,** a Democrat, and brings the board back to full strength of five until the August expiration of the term of **James Stephens,** board chairman under President Bush. In addition to Gould, Stephens and Truesdale, the other NLRB members are Democrat **Peg Browning** and Republican **Charles Cohen.**

Labor Secretary **Robert B. Reich** named **Betty Jean Hall** as a member and chair of the Benefits Review Board. The five-member board rules on appeals of administrative law judge decisions involving black lung benefits and Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act cases. Hall is executive director of the Occupational Safety and Health Law Center.

National Labor Relations Board General Counsel **Fred Feinstein** appointed **Peter A. Eveleth** as special counsel to the general counsel, a position in the Division of Operations-Management. Eveleth will represent the agency in cases before the Federal Labor Relations Authority, Merit Systems Protection Board, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Office of the Special Counsel and in the federal courts.

Michael Lescault will soon take office as assistant director at the AFL-CIO's European office in Paris. Lescault was regional director for Southern and East Africa for the AFL-CIO's African American Labor Center for eight years. He also served as AALC regional representative in Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and South Africa. Before coming to AALC, Lescault was an organizer for the Ladies' Garment Workers.

Teamsters President **Ron Carey** appointed **William W. Hamilton Jr.** to direct the union's legislative and political programs. Hamilton came to Washington in the 1960s to work for then-Sen. Ralph Yarborough (D-Texas). He worked with the late **Walter Reuther** and with **Jack T. Conway** at the Center for Community Change and joined AFSCME as public affairs director in 1971. In 1981, Hamilton opened a Washington legislative office for the Planned Parenthood Federation of America and became their vice president for public affairs.

Washington, D.C., broadcast journalist **Susan King** has been named executive director of a commission created to study the impact of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993. Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich said the commission will report on the effect of the new law on both employers and workers.

Union members and officials came to the rescue of the Salvation Army in its battle with Meijer Inc., which banned the organization from soliciting donations in front of its 86 stores in Ohio, Michigan and Indiana because of a strike last year by the Food and Commercial Workers. Detroit-area union members donned their own red buckets to replace the traditional red collection kettles and collected $3,000 in contributions for the Salvation Army during a one-hour period in front of a Meijer store in Taylor, Mich. In addition, the UFCW designated $10,000 to be contributed to holiday charities in Ohio, Michigan and Indiana.

Members of NABET/CWA Local 16 donated more than 150 stuffed animals and toys for children hospitalized during Christmas. The gifts, purchased from GUND, were distributed in the pediatrics wards of six New York City metropolitan hospitals. The event marked the local's second annual distribution. "Spending Christmas in the hospital is an experience that can be lonely and frightening," said Local President **Anthony B. Capitano,** "especially when the patient is a child."

DEATHS

Alfred W. DiTolla, president of the Theatrical Stage Employees, died at his home in New Jersey after severe medical problems. He was 68.

Under DiTolla's leadership from 1986-1994, IATSE membership increased from 60,000 to 76,000. He was instrumental in negotiating contracts with superior pension and health and welfare programs.

DiTolla began his career as a charter member of the Broadcasting Studio Employees Local 782, which he later merged into Radio and Television Sound Effects/Broadcasting Studio Employees Local 844. He was appointed as assistant to the president in 1978, a position he held until he was elected president in 1986.

He is survived by his wife, five children and seven grandchildren.

Emanuel (Slim) Boggs, a long-time trade union activist, diplomat and labor representative, died in California following a brief illness. He was 87.

Boggs had a distinguished career in unionism during the 1930s and organized laborers and workers in the tobacco, steel, retail and textile industries. From 1959 to 1969, he served as labor attache for the State Department in Bolivia and Panama and also worked for the AFL-CIO American Institute for Free Labor Development.

In 1975 he joined the Federation's Asian-American Free Labor Institute and served as country program director in Turkey. He retired in 1979.

Boggs is survived by his wife, two sons, a brother, two sisters and three grandchildren. One son, Michael Boggs, is international affairs director at the Laborers.

— Compiled by Muriel H. Cooper

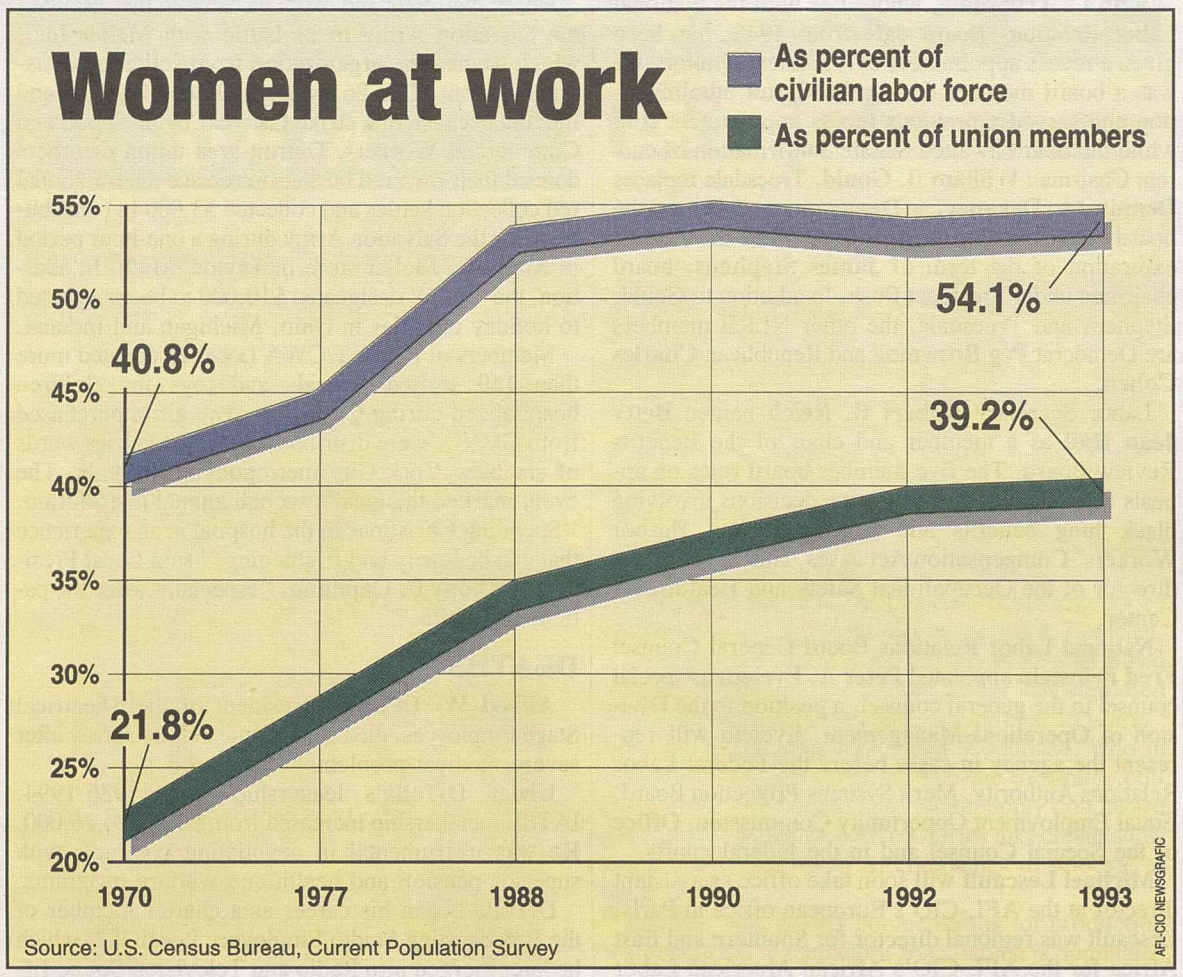
CONVENTION CALENDAR

This is a list of conventions and conferences scheduled for 1995 by the AFL-CIO, its affiliated unions, state AFL-CIOs and fraternal organizations. Changes and additions will be reported.

DATE	ORGANIZATION	PLACE
May 17-19	Michigan	Detroit
May 20-24	Distillery Workers	Miami Beach, Fla.
May 31-June 3	Texas	Austin
June 5-7	Grain Millers	Las Vegas
June 5-8	Metal Polishers	Las Vegas
June 11-17	Plate Printers and Die Stampers	Philadelphia
June 12-14	Idaho	Lewiston
June 17-23	The Newspaper Guild	Boston
June 17-21	AFSCME	Chicago
June 19-21	Musicians	Las Vegas
June 19-21	Arkansas	Hot Springs
June 19-23	Office and Professional Employees	Vancouver
June 21-24	Utility Workers	San Diego
June 23-30	Ladies' Garment Workers	Miami Beach
July 8-12	Hotel & Restaurant Employees	Chicago
July 10-11	Communications Workers	Anaheim, Calif.
July 14-19	Locomotive Engineers	Detroit
July 17-21	United Transportation Union	Chicago
July 17-21	Theatrical Stage Employees	Miami
July 22-23	Police Associations	Alexandria, Va.
Aug. 3-5	Virginia	Richmond
Aug. 8-11	Transportation Communications Union	Miami Beach
Aug. 16-18	Iowa	Waterloo
Sept. 11-13	Minnesota	Bloomington
Sept. 18-20	Oregon	Portland
Sept. 17-22	Amalgamated Transit Union	Las Vegas
Sept. 19-21	Washington	Tacoma
Sept. 20-22	Connecticut	Hartford
Sept. 21-23	North Dakota	Bismarck
Sept. 22-28	Machinists	Chicago
Sept. 24-29	Mine Workers	Miami Beach
Sept. 25-27	Nebraska	North Platte
Sept. 25-29	Carpenters	Las Vegas
Sept. 28-30	Montana	Billings
Oct. 2-5	Bricklayers	Chicago
Oct. 3-6	Massachusetts	Boston
Oct. 4-6	Kansas	Topeka
Oct. 23-25	Alabama	Birmingham
Oct. 23-26	Train Dispatchers	Las Vegas
Oct. 25-27	West Virginia	Charleston
Oct. 27-28	New Hampshire	North Conway
Nov. 13-15	Tennessee	Nashville
Nov. 18-26	Electronic Workers	Orlando

AFL-CIO Meetings

Jan. 19-20	National Labor Leaders' Conf. on Women and HIV/AIDS (CLUW)	Washington
Feb. 16	TTD Executive Committee	Bal Harbour, Fla.
Feb. 16-17	Maritime Trades Executive Board	Bal Harbour
Feb. 18	PED Executive Council	Bal Harbour
Feb. 20-24	AFL-CIO Executive Council	Bal Harbour
April 2-6	Civil Rights Institute	Silver Spring, Md.
April 21-23	Higher Education Conference	Boston
May 1-4	AFL-CIO Lawyers Conference	New Orleans
May 17-18	Secretary-Treasurers Conference	Detroit
May 19-22	Union Industries Show	Detroit
June 28-July 1	APRI National Education Conf.	Chicago
July 13-20	Community Services Department	Washington
Aug. 1-2	AFL-CIO Executive Council	Chicago
Aug. 4-6	APALA Convention	New York
Sept. 7-8	Public Employee Department	Lake Buena Vista, Fla.
Oct. 12-15	CLUW Convention	Denver
Oct. 23-26	AFL-CIO Convention	New York



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey

Changing work force leads to union gains

Continued from Page 1

up 58 percent of the work force in 1993. Unions have responded to the challenge of organizing these workers — by 1990, white-collar employees had already grown to more than 45 percent of union membership.

Much of that growth now is occurring in administrative support and professional and technical occupations, and this growth is expected to continue. By the year 2005, professional jobs likely will increase by 37 percent, while technical and support positions will rise by 32 percent, the DPE study notes.

Union membership has helped to narrow the pay gap between men and women in white collar jobs, although that gap still exists, DPE said. In 1993, professional women's salaries were 79 percent of their male counterparts; female technicians' earnings were 70.7 percent of men's; and women in administrative support positions earned 75.8 percent of men's salaries. Still, a union card ensured that white collar union members — as with unionists in all other occupations — earned more than their non-union counterparts.

Overall, in 1993, union membership increased slightly from the previous year, to 16.6 million members, marking the first increase over the 10-year period. The membership level of women increased by 238,000 members in 1993, while the level for men declined slightly in that period, by 30,000 members.

From 1983-1993, the number of male union members declined by 1.7 million while the number of female members grew by 607,000.

Over the 10-year period, women have held their own in terms of union membership as a percentage of all wage and salary workers, AFL-CIO economist Anne Draper said. The labor force participation rate of women has grown dramatically since 1983, up 24 percent. Since then, female union membership has grown by 607,000, for a 1993 rate of 13 percent, down just slightly from 1983's 15 percent level.

Women now make up 39 percent of union members, up from 33 percent in 1983. Men's membership rate has declined over the 10-year period, from 67 percent to 61 percent.

As of 1993, 77 percent of union members were white; 15 percent black; and 8 percent Hispanic. African-Americans make up about 11 percent of the U.S. population and Hispanics 6 percent.

All union women enjoyed a hefty earnings margin over their non-union counterparts. African-American union women earned wages 42 percent higher than African-American non-union women; Hispanic women earned 39 percent more; and white women had earnings 35 percent higher than their non-union counterparts.

Union membership also means higher earnings for men, with white men earning 23 percent more; African-American men 49 percent more; and Hispanic men a whopping 61 percent more than their non-union counterparts.

Industries with the largest share of union membership in 1993 included government, communications and public utilities, transportation and construction.

Union membership among young workers — ages 16-24 — also increased over the 1992-1993 period, the first uptick during the 10-year review period. Also increasing from 1992 was membership among workers aged 35-44 and 45-54.

In nearly all age categories, women posted an increase in union membership last year. Only for women aged 55-64 and older than 65 did membership drop slightly from the 1992 level.

Growth in public sector

The survey indicated a big jump in union representation among government workers, from 5.7 million in 1983 to more than 7 million a decade later. State, local and federal government workers now comprise 42 percent of union membership, up from 32 percent in 1983.

In private industry, union membership fell by 2.3 million over the review period. Some 11 percent of the private-sector work force and 38 percent of the public sector was organized as of 1993.

Industries with the largest share of union membership in 1993 included government, 38 percent; communications and public utilities, 33 percent; transportation, 29 percent; and construction, 20 percent.

Over the 1983-1993 period, union membership increased in 14 states and remained constant in one other. New York, with 29 percent of the work force organized, and Hawaii, with 28 percent, had the highest levels of unionization in 1993. Other states with levels of union representation above 20 percent last year include Alaska, 20 percent; Illinois, 21 percent; Michigan, 25 percent; Minnesota, 21 percent; New Jersey, 22 percent; Ohio, 21 percent; Oregon, 20 percent; and Washington, 24 percent.

The data on union membership by state were based on data from the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey and prepared by Barry T. Hirsch and David A. Macpherson of Florida State University.

The AFL-CIO survey is based on Bureau of Labor Statistics data on union membership, race, sex, age, earnings and industry/occupation that was gleaned from the census survey of some 60,000 households. The DPE's "Current Statistics on Professional Employees" examines trends and likely growth in occupations and union membership among white-collar workers into the next century.

1,000 new UFW members pull out win amid thorns

More than 1,000 workers at Bear Production Co. in Wasco, Calif., won their fight for representation by the Farm Workers. Bear Creek, the nation's largest rose producer, has resisted unionization throughout its 127-year history.

"They organized themselves under the UFW's black-eagle banner," said UFW President Arturo Rodriguez at a Dec. 19 press conference. "They courageously took a stand for the union in the face of severe coercion, harassment and racial epithets. They realized the meaning of the union's motto, "every worker is an organizer."

The 648-433 vote came after a contentious week that included demonstrations and layoffs of workers who supported the union. The vote was supervised by the state Agricultural Labor Relations Board.

In a Dec. 19 statement, Bear Creek President William H. Williams said the company will "move ahead in a positive manner in good faith negotiations with the UFW." Rodriguez said he was pleased that company officials at Bear Creek's headquarters in Medford, Ore., would not contest the election results.

"Some of the growers are beginning to understand that after 32 years the union is not going to go away," Rodriguez added. The union had told Bear Creek it planned to hold its corporate parents, Shaklee Corporation and Yamanouchi Pharmaceutical Company, responsible for the company's actions.

The issues of concern to the workers include low pay, discrimination against older employees, the inability for most workers to qualify for company medical and pension plan benefits, and threats from management.

The union's success at Bear Creek is the eighth election the union has won since April, when the union concluded a 343-mile pilgrimage from Delano to Sacramento, Calif., to mark the first anniversary of Cesar Chavez's death and to renew organizing.

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Report on Congress

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AFL-CIO NEWS

VOLUME 40, NUMBER 2

JANUARY 23, 1995

Worker safety at risk in rush to deregulate

By Colleen M. O'Neill

The safety and health of American workers faces a grave threat from a new Congress bent on deregulation, the AFL-CIO warned.

Testifying Jan. 19 before a House Governmental Reform and Oversight subcommittee, AFL-CIO job safety director Peg Seminario assailed a proposed regulatory moratorium.

"The AFL-CIO believes that the proposed moratorium is an unjustified and unnecessary measure that will prevent executive branch agencies from carrying out their statutory responsibilities," Seminario said. "One of the most significant impacts . . . would be to halt important government regulations necessary to protect workers and their families."

One reason given for the Republican push for a moratorium was to provide the executive branch with the opportunity to inventory all regulatory activity, even though all regulatory agencies already conduct such an inventory and publish the information biannually, she noted.

The committee is considering H.R. 450, the Regulatory Transition Act of 1995, which includes an all-inclusive definition of a regulatory action as well as a six-month moratorium on regulation that applies to all measures and would be effective from Nov. 9, 1994, through June 30, 1995.

The real intent of H.R. 450 is the continued delay of federal regulatory action, Seminario testified. "The primary target of the bill appears to be those regulations which are designed to protect the interests of the public."

Separate legislation threatens Occupational Safety and Health Administration funding for the current fiscal year, and seeks to curtail the agency's enforcement powers and instruct OSHA to redirect enforcement funds to pay for "consultation" services with employers who violate existing rules.

Health and safety measures that would take big hits under H.R. 450 include OSHA standards under development governing ergonomics, exposure limits for the carcinogenic chemical methylene chloride and the glycol ethers compounds, and scaffold protections for construction workers.

The ergonomics rule has been in process since midway through the Bush administration, and it is clear from numerous studies how such a standard could have a positive impact on workers.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics recently reported that repetitive stress injuries related to ergonomic hazards are the fastest-growing category of occupational ill-

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Decatur (Ill.) Herald & Review

Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich meets in Galesburg, Ill., with presidents of local unions striking Caterpillar, Bridgestone/Firestone and A.E. Staley. Behind Reich, from left, are Roger Gates of Rubber Workers Local 713, Larry Solomon of UAW Local 751, David Watts of Paperworkers Local 7837, Rep. Glenn Poshard (D-Ill.) and Jerry Brown of UAW Local 974.

With push, Bridgestone talks

By James B. Parks

After losing $80 million in profits and receiving strong protests from President Clinton, Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich and four U.S. senators, Bridgestone/Firestone finally sat down with its employees to discuss ways of ending a long-running strike.

Negotiators for the Rubber Workers and the company met with federal mediators Jan. 18 in Chicago, the first such meeting in six months. The meeting came about two weeks after the company announced it would permanently replace 2,300 of the striking 4,200 employees.

That action sparked a flurry of activity in Washington, including a strongly worded protest from Clinton.

"By bringing in permanent replacements for their workers who are on strike, while refusing to come to the bargaining table, the management of Bridgestone/Firestone is flagrantly turning its back on our tradition of peaceful collective bargaining to solve labor disputes," the president said in a Jan. 13 statement.

"When companies replace their workers under these circumstances, they sow seeds of distrust and resentment which can extend far beyond their company, undermining labor-management relations across the land," Clinton said.

The statement came after Bridgestone/Firestone's president Masatoshi Ono refused to meet with Reich, who expressed his outrage at the company's attitude.

"Japanese companies have been model citizens in this country. This company has just thrown that out the window," Reich said. "At the very least, I wanted a briefing (about the situation). The company responded and said he was unavailable and would not and could not talk to me. I consider that surprising and pretty outrageous."

Ono was the first chief executive or labor leader involved in a strike to ever turn down an appeal from him to meet and talk, Reich said.

Reich and Rep. Glenn Poshard (D-Ill.) met Jan. 10 with more than half a dozen leaders of union locals involved in three strikes in Decatur, Ill., including Roger Gates, president of URW Local 713.

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Democrats slow right-wing congressional steamroller

By Mike Hall

Action slowed last week on two major items in the Republicans' "Contract with America" that would place labor laws, workplace safety rules, civil rights statutes and environmental laws in jeopardy.

But despite the delays, Congress is expected to vote by the end of January on both a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution and a ban on so-called unfunded mandates.

The attempt to steamroll the unfunded mandates bill through the Senate was halted by Sen. Robert C. Byrd (D-W.Va.), who strenuously objected to bringing the bill to the floor before committee reports were finished. At issue is any bill passed by Congress that requires (mandates) a state or local government to take an action that is not fully paid for (unfunded) by the federal government.

The bill (S. 1) is expected to be acted on first by the Senate. The AFL-CIO has urged the Senate to reject the bill, but it has 58 co-sponsors. The federation is backing several amendments aimed at making the bill less onerous to workers.

Advocates of the ban claim it would affect only future laws, trying to gloss over the fact that current measures could be overridden anytime they need to be reauthorized or amended. That meets the reactionary goal of rolling back well-respected federal programs that would not be defeated if they were addressed in their own name.

Examples of current mandates include the Family and Medical Leave Act, minimum wage requirements, the Davis-Bacon Act, occupational safety and health standards and a host of other vital labor laws.

"Laws designed to protect the health, safety and civil liberties of working Americans and their families

Continued on Page 3

Montana unionists beat back 'right to work'

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

The anticipated battles with anti-union forces in state legislatures across the country got under way with a dramatic victory for labor over so-called ''right-to-work'' legislation in Montana.

With an overflow crowd of more than 500 trade unionists filling the galleries Jan. 15, Montana's Republican-dominated House Business and Labor Committee voted 13-5 to table the bill, effectively killing it for this session.

After listening to 30 minutes of testimony from Montana labor leaders, the committee's six Democrats were joined by seven Republicans in rejecting the proposal.

The measure would have made Montana the nation's 22nd state banning union security clauses in private-sector collective bargaining contracts. Union security clauses require everyone who benefits from a union contract to pay a fair share for the cost of the contract.

The ''right to work'' is nothing of the sort, Montana AFL-CIO Executive Secretary Don Judge told the 8 a.m. committee meeting. ''It's ironic that these hundreds of working men and women would forgo a day's pay and drive hundreds of miles over Montana's winter roads to oppose this legislation, and the only proponents of so-called right-to-work are employers and officers of the state Right-to-Work Committee,'' he said.

Praising Republican Gov. Marc Racicot for threatening to veto right-to-work legislation, Judge said he did not believe the committee would resurrect the tabled bill, even though the legislature's rules allow such a move with a simple majority vote of committee members.

Still, labor is facing more challenges in this session, including attacks on public employees, prevailing wages, workers' compensation and a host of other issues, Judge said.

Joining labor in opposition to the bill were representatives of the Montana Catholic Conference, the Low-Income Coalition, Senior Citizens, Trial Lawyers, the American Civil Liberties Union, the Montana Human Rights Network and the Catholic Priests Social Justice Committee.

Meanwhile, workers and their unions also are braced for possible right-to-work proposals in Oklahoma, Colorado, New Hampshire and Oregon, all a result of the changed political climate from the 1994 elections. In Oklahoma, unlike Montana, Republican Gov. Frank Keating actually campaigned for right-to-work legislation and urged the legislature to pass the measure.



Montana AFL-CIO photo

Trade unionists fill gallery during testimony before Montana legislators table right-to-work bill.

The so-called Oklahoma Freedom to Work law was introduced in the state Senate Jan. 6 and five other right-to-work bills have been introduced in the House.

Proponents of the legislation are trying to sell it as a worker-friendly measure, which it is not, said Ross Williams of the Oklahoma AFL-CIO. Workers in Arkansas, one of Oklahoma's three neighboring right-to-work states, earn almost $2,000 a year less than workers in Oklahoma, he pointed out, and workers in free-bargaining states nationwide earn $4,343 more than the average in right-to-work states.

The New Hampshire legislature has been considering right-to-work legislation since the 1980s. Last year, the proposal was shot down by a 247-106 vote, the largest margin thus far in the state legislature.

Trade unionists this year are preparing an intense campaign complete with mailings, a public education media component, letter-writing and phone calls.

The campaign will require everything labor can do, warned New Hampshire AFL-CIO President Mark MacKenzie, who pointed out that the entire right-to-work campaign seems to be headquartered in the state Republican National Committee office.

In Oregon, efforts again are under way to gain a 1996 ballot initiative to impose so-called ''right-to-work'' on public employees. The Oregon Right to Work Committee is seeking ballot approval from the legislature, where Republicans control both chambers. The state Supreme Court also must approve ballot measures. Oregon Gov. John Kitzhaber is a Democrat who opposes right-to-work laws.

In New Mexico, right-to-work legislation failed miserably in 1989, but the new GOP governor may try to reverse a state court decision that struck down a city ordinance permitting right-to-work on the local level. Democrats still control the House and Senate.

Right-to-work legislation, masquerading under the title ''Freedom of Association,'' has been introduced in Colorado, but Gov. Roy Roemer has said he will veto it. Although Republicans control the state House and Senate, it is predicted there are not sufficient votes to override a veto. The measure was defeated in 1991 in the state House by a 31-30 vote.

Quality education needs collective bargaining, AFT testifies

The right of teachers to organize and bargain collectively is essential to achieving excellence in education, the AFT told a federal task force.

''High performance workplaces, excellence and higher standards all require real involvement on the part of teachers and the employees of the school district,'' AFT Secretary-Treasurer Edward J. McElroy told the Labor Department's Task Force on Excellence in State and Local Government.

But many public employees are covered by collective bargaining laws that ''have no teeth in them and cannot engage in real negotiations.''

''If we support the notion of partnership in achieving excellence, then we should not maintain bargaining laws where the employer always makes the final decision,'' he added.

He cited several cases where AFT locals have bargained educational improvements, including a peer review and mentoring program in Toledo, Ohio; a disciplinary code to restore a positive learning environment in Cincinnati; a joint school board-union student recruitment program in Pittsburgh; ''break the mold'' schools in New York City; and a student training program in Chicago.

However, larger-scale improvements are needed, McElroy said. The process of education reform will be best served where employees have the full representation rights necessary to any free and democratic society, he added.

The task force heard from other union representatives about how workplace problems are best solved when workers are allowed to form unions. Successful labor-management relations require having problem-solving mechanisms in place, said Utility Workers Vice President Donald Wightman.

He cited a grievance mediation process that was negotiated for public employees at Boston Edison Co. The grievance mediation helped both sides in the dispute to begin negotiating again, which is the most important process in resolving disputes, Wightman said.

This was the second meeting of the task force, which was created to investigate the state of labor-management relations in state and local government. AFSCME President Gerald R. McEntee and Service Employees President John J. Sweeney testified at the Oct. 19 hearing.

— Sharolyn A. Rosier

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Director of Information: Rex Hardesty

Editor: Michael Byrne

Assistant Editors: Candice Johnson, David Kameras, James B. Parks

Staff Writers: Muriel H. Cooper, Mike Hall, Colleen M. O'Neill, Sharolyn A. Rosier

Graphics/layout: Stan Hitt

AFL-CIO Headquarters: 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006
Telephone: (202) 637-5010
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Worker protections threatened

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will be undermined,'' AFL-CIO Legislative Director Robert M. McGlotten said in a letter to the Senate.

S. 1 gives Congress huge hurdles to clear in order to pass any law that would require a state or local government to meet federal standards. It requires the Congressional Budget Office to prepare a detailed accounting of any cost to state and local governments along with a mechanism for funding.

''These analyses would be expensive and time consuming and produce information of limited utility to the Congress. The real effect will be to stall important legislation,'' McGlotten said.

If it becomes law, S. 1 probably would ensure that proposals to extend occupational safety and health protections to state and local government employees would not occur, critics contend.

It would kill chances to increase minimum wages for state and local government employees or to extend unemployment insurance. It also would imperil such vital programs as the ''motor voter law,'' uniform protections under the Safe Drinking Water Act and the establishment of a nationwide database to combat child abuse.

To lessen the impact, the AFL-CIO has urged senators to support an amendment to exempt measures affecting statutory employment rights of employees.

Additionally, the federation backs another amendment that would insert a sunset provision into the bill. Sunset provisions compel re-examination, in this case after two years, and the legislation dies if not renewed.

Another labor-backed amendment would ensure that statutory protections for children, the elderly and other vulnerable populations are not jeopardized by S. 1.

When the Senate finishes its work on unfunded mandates, it will be set to take up the balanced budget resolution, which according to some estimates could call for more than $1.6 trillion in spending cuts. That is one of several reasons the AFL-CIO has been a long-time foe of a balanced budget constitutional amendment.

Republican leaders admitted that if they were forced to detail the budget cuts needed to bring the federal checkbook into balance by 2002, lawmakers and the public would be so shocked that the amendment might not pass.

''Once members of Congress know exactly . . . the pain government must live with in order to get a balanced government, their knees will buckle,'' House Majority Leader Richard Armey (R-Texas) said.

That's why, opponents say, Republicans refuse to outline their plans to reduce federal spending until after Congress passes the amendment.

''People have a right to know what this means in their life. It may cause reductions in Social Security, Medicare or other programs,'' House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.) said.

''What we are saying is that we're not signing the contract until you show us the fine print. We don't believe in cloak-and-dagger public policy,'' he said.

''Not discussing options with the American people is like a suitor who tells his prospective bride, 'Marry me and I will make you happy.' But when she asks what he has in mind, he simply answers, 'trust me, baby,''' Byrd said.

Laws under fire

These are some of the current laws that would be threatened by passage of the unfunded mandates bill:

- ✘ Student Loan Reform
- ✘ Family and Medical Leave Act
- ✘ Food Stamp Program
- ✘ National Voter Registration Act
- ✘ National Child Protection Act
- ✘ United States Grain Standards Act
- ✘ Cable Television Consumer Protection Act
- ✘ College Work Study Program
- ✘ Drug-Free Schools and Community Act
- ✘ Education for All Handicapped Children
- ✘ Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act of 1986
- ✘ Clean Air Act
- ✘ Clean Air Act Amendments
- ✘ Superfund
- ✘ Federal Water Pollution Control Act
- ✘ Civil Rights Act of 1964
- ✘ Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- ✘ Black Lung Benefits Act
- ✘ Davis-Bacon Act of 1981
- ✘ Disabled Vets. Outreach/Local Veterans Employment Programs
- ✘ Walsh-Healy Public Contracts Act
- ✘ Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938
- ✘ Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (Highway/Mass Transit)
- ✘ Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Programs
- ✘ Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964
- ✘ Vessel Safety Standards
- ✘ Veterans Education Assistance
- ✘ National School Lunch Act
- ✘ Supplemental Security Income for the Aged, Blind and Disabled
- ✘ Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act
- ✘ Federal Unemployment Tax Act
- ✘ Job Training Partnership Act
- ✘ Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards
- ✘ Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970
- ✘ Older Workers' Benefit Protection Act
- ✘ Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977

House and Senate GOP leaders had planned early action on balanced budget resolutions, but the effort has been slowed by the flap over identifying the spending cuts, a reluctance on the part of more moderate Republicans to require a three-fifths vote among members of Congress for any tax increase and negative reaction from some long-time Republican economists.

A resolution to amend the Constitution requires a two-thirds vote in the House and Senate and then must be ratified by the legislatures of three-fourth of the states.

Regulatory assault puts job safety at risk

Continued from Page 1

ness, with more than 300,000 new cases reported in 1993. Overall, the rate of injury has increased more than 700 percent in the past decade.

However, the rate of injury has slowed in the meatpacking and auto assembly industries, where OSHA has developed guidelines and conducted enforcement activities.

The methylene chloride rule has been in process nearly 10 years, and the glycol ethers standard has been in development nine years.

Falls are among the most common causes of construction fatalities, and the rule designed to protect workers on scaffolding is due to be released any day now.

''Six-month delays on these rules serve no purpose,'' Seminario said. ''Dilatory tactics will not result in a more efficient federal government, but in additional, avoidable tragedies.''

In addition, the proposed moratorium would delay safety and health protections being fashioned by the Mine Safety and Health Administration.

Seminario also pointed out the effect of the proposed moratorium on other legislation. The retroactivity clause would suspend the final rules governing the Family and Medical Leave Act, as well as the addition by the Environmental Protection Agency of 286 chemicals to the toxic release inventory, which aids in the reduction of harmful exposures.

An honest review of regulatory procedures is of course always in order, she told the panel, but the ''this 'meat cleaver' approach to regulatory relief is neither honest nor justified.

''The fine print of the 'Contract With America' — highlighted by initiatives such as the legislation before us today — means fewer worker safety protections, ineffective pollution prevention laws, weak protections against such childhood threats as lead poisoning and dangerous toys and the elimination of food safety protections.''

CAPITOL DIGEST

The 40-hour week and the Davis-Bacon Act are the latest targets of Republican legislators who have adopted the pro-business agenda to destroy labor laws and workplace regulations.

Millions of skilled construction workers could see their wages slashed under bills, adamantly opposed by the AFL-CIO, introduced in the House and Senate to repeal the Davis-Bacon Act. The act simply requires employers to pay the prevailing wage for work on federal projects.

Rep. William F. Goodling (R-Pa.), new chairman of the Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee — formerly the Education and Labor Committee — said his committee plans to go after the Fair Labor Standards Act, the cornerstone of the 40-hour week, overtime rules and compensatory time regulations.

DAVIS-BACON — Frontal assault on construction wages came in the form of S. 141, introduced by Sen. Nancy L. Kassebaum (R-Kan.), new chairman of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, and H.R. 500, introduced by Rep. Cass Ballenger (R-N.C.).

Republicans also plan to use ''unfunded mandate'' legislation, the balanced budget amendment, so-called regulatory reform and other vehicles for back-door attacks on workers' wages **(See story, Page 1).**

''If this bill should pass, more than 4 million skilled workers will find their tax dollars used to slash their pay and living standards,'' said Robert A. Georgine, president of the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department.

The legislation ''was based on myths grounded in ultra-radical, right-wing ideology and allegiance to special-interest campaign contributors,'' he said.

The Davis-Bacon Act was designed to outlaw wage exploitation in federal construction contracts by preventing the federal government from undercutting local area labor standards.

Along with protecting workers, the act provides important safeguards for businesses, the federal government and the taxpayer. By establishing a wage-rate floor, the law provides local builders with a fair chance to compete for government projects on the basis of skill and efficiency, rather than losing this work to disreputable competitors who could underbid by paying substandard wages.

Georgine noted that in the 12 states that repealed prevailing wage laws over the past two decades, workers' wages and benefits have declined rapidly. Apprenticeship opportunities were reduced or eliminated, while the availability of skilled workers declined and injury and death rates increased.

The AFL-CIO is forming a broad-based coalition to fight the legislation. Hearings on the bill have not been scheduled.

40-HOUR WEEK — Legislation is expected to be introduced soon that would gut the principles of the 40-hour week, time-and-a-half for overtime and other provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. The bill is expected to be modeled on proposals developed by the Labor Policy Association, an advocacy group that lobbies for the nation's largest corporations.

An internal memo by House Republicans on the Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee called the FLSA ''a barrier to flexible scheduling and compensation practices in the workplace.''

Goodling said the FLSA ''causes more harm than good'' and said legislation would seek ''alternatives to the traditional 40-hour workweek.''

In a Jan. 10 address, Goodling echoed many themes business groups have trumpeted for years. He said workplace and employment regulations ''ranging from the National Labor Relations Act, the Davis-Bacon Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act, the Occupational Safety and Health Act, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans With Disabilities Act and the Fair Labor Standards Act . . . have missed the mark.''

His speech made no mention of any role for labor unions in the workplace. However, he gave workers and unions some food for thought.

''Our challenge for the 104th, Republican-led Congress is clear and unequivocal,'' he said. ''We must re-examine the entire spectrum of our nation's employment and workplace laws.''

Training partnership extolled as key to change

By David Kameras

Government, business and labor must work together to train workers to compete in a rapidly changing economy, the AFL-CIO said.

Noting that the United States has lagged behind other industrialized nations in investment in training, Legislative Director Robert M. McGlotten told the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources that "it will take the combined resources of the public and private sectors, business and labor to make our training system the best in the world."

He urged "the establishment of tripartite governance structures at the federal, state and local level where labor, business and community leaders can help guide the new training system."

While the AFL-CIO favors a comprehensive training system, Trade Adjustment Assistance should be retained as a separate program, McGlotten said, arguing that the nation's 30-year-old commitment of special attention to the needs of workers displaced by government trade policies should be continued.

The Clinton administration is seeking to replace various existing adult job training programs with a single program, with workers given vouchers they can exchange for learning new skills. But such individual training grants may be more effective with some workers than with others, McGlotten warned.

> *"Full and continuing labor participation, involvement and input are absolutely essential... because it convinces workers that they have a stake in the process and the results."*
>
> **— Robert M. McGlotten**
> **AFL-CIO legislative director**

"For most unemployed workers with family responsibilities, mortgages and other bills, participating in classroom training is impossible unless they get income support," he said. "For these workers, a grant gives little help in balancing immediate family survival and long-term employment security."

Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) and other members of the panel also expressed concern with the potential for abuse of a voucher program by what McGlotten called "overnight operations," unaccredited programs incapable of providing adequate training. "Vouchers cannot do the job alone," Kennedy said.

A restructured training system must address the multiple barriers to good jobs that many workers, including older workers, face, McGlotten said. It also must be accountable to the taxpayer, without duplicating investments that employers would make anyway.

McGlotten pointed to the success unions have had through apprenticeships and other programs in turning workplaces into learning places.

"Full and continuing labor participation, involvement and input are absolutely essential in all training-related areas," he said. "Such participation is vital because it convinces workers that they have a stake in the process and the results."

The administration also wants to use any money saved from consolidating existing training programs for a national network of one-stop career centers. The AFL-CIO has argued that these centers, while promising, should be handled through the existing Employment Service, which has the expertise needed to advise job-seekers.

Meanwhile, the Labor Department has launched a national survey to assess the skills required for the high-performance workplace.

COURTS

WARN time limit studied

The U.S. Supreme Court will determine whether lawsuits under the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act are governed by state statutes of limitation or the shorter six-month period under federal labor laws.

The 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals rejected the companies' argument that the WARN Act is governed by the same time limitations as the National Labor Relations Act.

The cases arose from mass layoffs at North Star Steel and Crown Cork & Seal. Workers allege that they were laid off without receiving the 60 days' notice required under the WARN Act. A federal district court dismissed North Star Steel vs. Thomas for being filed too late under the NLRA. Another district court said the federal time limit did not apply in Crown Cork & Seal vs. Steelworkers.

The appeals court ruled that although there is overlap in the two laws, the purposes are different and the state statute of limitations should govern WARN Act cases.

N.J. permits mall leaflets

In a victory for the Farm Workers, the New Jersey Supreme Court upheld the right of residents to such free speech activities as leafletting inside malls.

The UFW, which often appeals for public support of its consumer campaigns inside shopping centers, filed a brief in the case, New Jersey Coalition, et. al. vs. JMB Realty. The case arose out of efforts by groups protesting the Persian Gulf war to hand out leaflets in malls managed by JMB.

"This New Jersey ruling affirms what the Farm Workers have believed and fought for over three decades," said UFW President Arturo Rodriquez. "It opens the door for other states to expand First Amendment rights so causes such as ours can reach the American people where they increasingly congregate — in large regional malls."

Overtime denied reporter

The Newspaper Guild is considering whether to appeal a decision by a federal judge that an investigative reporter does not qualify for overtime under federal labor law.

Judge Norma Holloway Johnson ruled that Tom Sherwood, who was an investigative reporter for The Washington Post, was exempt from overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act because he qualifies as an "artistic professional."

Sherwood, who worked for the Post for 15 years, frequently worked more than 40 hours a week but was never paid overtime, the court found. The Post is not liable for overtime, Johnson said, because Sherwood was not "a robot run by his editors," but that his "primary duty as a reporter consisted of the performance of work requiring imagination and talent."

Workers say: 'Ask before you eat'

'Siege of Shame' spreads into Cincinnati restaurants

By Colleen M. O'Neill

It's getting harder to find a decent restaurant in Cincinnati these days.

The rallying cry for 64 striking Klosterman Bakery workers and their supporters has been: "Ask before you eat — ask for anything but Klosterman's." The bakery supplies buns to the majority of restaurants in the area, including Arby's franchises and Riverfront Stadium.

More than 2,500 area residents have signed cards pledging to boycott Klosterman's products.

The members of Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers Local 57 have been on strike at the Klosterman facility in Cincinnati since June 19, 1994. Unfair labor practices and the company's intractable negotiating strategy sent the workers to the streets nine months after being forced to accept a $4.50-an-hour cut in their wage and benefits package, changes in the overtime policy and scheduling.

In 12 hours, the management had scabs in place for both the production and sanitation workers.

Solidarity has remained strong on the 7-month-old picket line, with no one crossing. Strikers received $63 per week in strike pay until Jan. 1, when the amount increased to $70. Some of the "replaced" workers had been with Klosterman for more than 20 years, and had but a few years to work before qualifying for full pensions.

BCT President Frank Hurt, in a November letter, called upon the Klosterman family to end the "Siege of Shame."

"I implore you to pause and take to heart the cause of the loyal workers who have supplied you faithfully over the years with their sweat and toil," he wrote to Kenneth Klosterman, "which have resulted in a good life for the entire Klosterman family and substantial growth for the company — both of which are being threatened by the unilateral and unconscionable bashing of worker rights."

Workers have won several legal victories during their long struggle. The National Labor Relations Board issued a complaint against Klosterman last March, three months before the strike was called, charging the company:

- Unilaterally changed wages and benefits prior to the existence of a bona fide impasse.
- Refused to permit workers and their representatives to examine company records so that they could properly prepare for contract bargaining.
- Unilaterally implemented a call-in policy for fill-in employees.
- Refused to process grievances.
- Refused to allow the union to distribute information to the workers about the company's action.
- Wrongfully discharged an employee.

A hearing on the charges is still pending. Meanwhile, the NLRB in November overruled an administrative law judge and determined that a union organizer in another of Klosterman's facilities had been unjustly disciplined via suspension.



Cincinnati AFL-CIO photo

Bus cards are among the media used in the campaign against Klosterman Bakery.

The company was ordered to cease and desist from such action. More importantly, it was ordered to post a statement at the employee's plant in Springfield, Ohio, assuring workers union activities would be protected.

In addition, Klosterman's faces $21,350 in Occupational Safety and Health Administration fines for violations at the Cincinnati plant. The safety agency cited the company for failing to safeguard workers' hearing; improper storage of hazardous, flammable or combustible liquids; and failing to have proper access to exits, among other violations.

"Klosterman's operates under the notion that they and they alone will determine what the law is and what is best for the employees," said Vester Newsome, executive secretary-treasurer of BCT Local 57, of the OSHA charges. "Klosterman's will have to learn that they cannot exploit workers and get away with it."

The Cincinnati labor community has been very supportive, with nearly 400 turning out for a November rally.

"There are more people outside Klosterman's than those working inside this anti-worker company because our community is standing side-by-side with the workers who are fighting for fairness," Cincinnati AFL-CIO Executive Secretary-Treasurer Dan Radford said at that gathering. "Our community is saying no to unfair treatment of workers; we're saying no to Klosterman-style union busting. And, we're saying no to Klosterman scab bakery."

Workers received Thanksgiving baskets and toys and food for Christmas, courtesy of local companies and fellow trade unionists. And their supporters continue to ask before they eat out.

Report on Congress

Labor's report on Congress tabulates the votes on major issues to workers in the second session of the 103rd Congress. In the tables on the pages that follow, Senate and House members have been rated R (right) and W (wrong) on the basis of their votes on these issues. The report is compiled by Mike Hall.



Rich Reinhard/UAW

UAW members call for passage of S. 55, the Workplace Fairness Act, at a rally on Capitol Hill.

House

1 • GOALS 2000: EDUCATE AMERICA ACT (H.R. 1804) — The AFL-CIO strongly endorsed one of the most ambitious education and training bills of recent years. The bill establishes, for the first time, skill and performance standards for students and provides a role for union workers in shaping some of those standards. The bill passed the House March 23 by a 306-121 vote.

For — Right **Against — Wrong**

2 • BLACK LUNG BENEFITS (H.R. 2108) — Restrictions placed on the Black Lung Benefits Act during the Bush and Reagan administrations were so stringent that only 4 percent of Mine Workers who applied for benefits gained eligibility. This bill makes the process more equitable for miners and their spouses. The legislation was passed by the House May 19 by a 252-166 vote.

For — Right **Against — Wrong**

3 • OSHA, MSHA BUDGET RAID (Amendment to H.R. 4606) — During consideration of the 1995 Labor/HHS appropriations bill, the AFL-CIO opposed an amendment to strip some $47.5 million in enforcement funds from several programs, including the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the Mine Safety and Health Administration and the Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration. Initially approved by the House, the amendment was brought up for reconsideration June 29 and it failed on a 211-217 vote.

For — Wrong **Against — Right**

4 • MARITIME SECURITY ACT: TONNAGE TAX (H.R. 4003) — The tonnage tax could raise some $1.3 billion over 10 years to fund legislation designed to boost U.S.-flag shipping and American shipyards. It was approved by a 268-153 vote Aug. 2.

For — Right **Against — Wrong**

5 • NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS (H.R. 6) — This five-year reauthorization for the programs under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 also set a funding formula to increase the money available to school districts with higher concentrations of poor students. The conference report was passed by the House Sept. 30 by a 262-132 vote.

For — Right **Against — Wrong**

6 • GATT — The AFL-CIO strongly opposed the Uruguay Round multilateral trade agreement, arguing that it would cost tens of thousands of U.S. textile and apparel industry jobs, weaken U.S. trade laws designed to combat unfair trade practices and sanction the abuse of worker rights by governments seeking a low-wage standard for the world market. The AFL-CIO position lost on Nov. 29 when the House approved the implementing legislation by 288-146.

For — Wrong **Against — Right**

7 • BALANCED BUDGET CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT (H.J. Res 103) — This resolution would have prohibited budget deficits starting in 2001 and would have required a three-fifths vote in each house to approve deficit spending or to raise taxes. That would hamstring control of the $1.5 trillion budget and seriously undermine Congress' ability to help maintain national economic stability. Requiring a two-thirds majority to pass, the measure was defeated in the House March 17 by 271-152.

For — Wrong **Against — Right**

8 • BUDGET RESOLUTION: PROGRAM CUTS (H. Con. Res. 218) — The 1995 budget resolution included an additional $26 billion in discretionary spending cuts voted by the Senate. The House action was on a motion, opposed by the AFL-CIO, to instruct its conferees to accept those Senate cuts. The House rejected the motion April 14 by a 202-216 margin.

For — Wrong **Against — Right**

9 • MFN FOR CHINA (H.R. 4590) — The AFL-CIO opposed the administration's decision to extend most-favored-nation (MFN) trading status to China because of China's brutal abuse of worker rights. But MFN would be extended if Congress didn't act. This effort to set certain human and worker rights conditions for continued MFN trade status for China was defeated Aug. 8 by a 158-270 vote.

For — Right **Against — Wrong**

Senate

1 • FEDERAL WORKER BUYOUTS — A reduction of some 252,000 federal workers over the next five years would include buyouts of up to $25,000 as incentives for early retirement or to encourage workers to leave the government voluntarily. The Senate, however, stipulated that the savings from the work force reduction be used to pay for new anti-crime programs, and a Republican filibuster threatened to stall the legislation. Cloture failed 58-41 on March 24, but succeeded later and the bill became law.

For — Right **Against — Wrong**

2 • EDUCATION: GOALS 2000 — The Educate America Act assures that the national skill standards provisions are balanced and developed in partnership with labor, business and educators. The legislation also will provide a major stimulus to education reform efforts in the states. The bill passed the Senate March 25 by a 63-22 vote.

For — Right **Against — Wrong**

3 • DAVIS-BACON — During consideration of the Safe Drinking Water Act (S. 2019), several amendments were offered to weaken prevailing wage protections, including one by Sen. Alan K. Simpson (R-Wyo.) to let states exempt certain communities from Davis-Bacon requirements for any construction or repair work. That was defeated 45-53.

For — Wrong **Against — Right**

4 • PRODUCT LIABILITY (S. 687) — This legislation would have unfairly limited the rights of workers while affording special interest protection to the manufacturers of defective products. The AFL-CIO was particularly concerned with limiting the rights of injured workers to receive workers' compensation. A cloture motion failed by a 57-41 vote June 29.

For — Wrong **Against — Right**

5 • WORKPLACE FAIRNESS (S.55) — This important proposal, which would have banned the use of ''permanent replacements'' by employers during an economic strike, was stymied by a Republican filibuster. A motion to invoke cloture failed 53-47 July 12 (a three-fifths majority was needed) and the bill died.

For — Right **Against — Wrong**

6 • GATT — Congress was urged to reject the Uruguay Round on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade because of its harm to working people and their communities. But the Senate, on Dec. 1, followed the House in approving the implementing legislation by a 76-24 vote.

For — Wrong **Against — Right**

7 • BALANCED BUDGET CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT (S.J. Res. 41) — The AFL-CIO opposed this amendment because it would damage the economy and limit important services to American workers and their families. It was defeated in the Senate March 1 by a 63-37 vote.

For — Wrong **Against — Right**

8 • UNFUNDED MANDATES — This ban on any provision of federal law or regulation that requires state or local governments to spend money puts at risk decades of progress in civil rights, environmental, health, public safety, minimum wage and worker protection laws. A battleground for the issue was the Safe Drinking Water Act (S. 2019), which required state and local governments to help provide drinking water that meets national standards for safety. This vote was to table an amendment that would have allowed communities to avoid penalties for some non-compliance. The amendment was tabled 56-43 on May 17.

For — Right **Against — Wrong**

HOW YOUR REPRESENTATIVES V

	Education: Goals 2000	Black Lung Benefits	OSHA-MSHA Budget Raid	Maritime Security Act	Education: Neighborhood Schools	GATT	Labor Votes		Balanced Budget Amendment	Budget Resolution	China MFN	Total All Votes 1994		1994 Percentage	Lifetime Voting Record		Lifetime Right Percentage
	1	2	3	4	5	6	R	W	7	8	9	R	W	%	R	W	%
Alabama																	
1 Callahan (R)	W	W	W	R	A	W	1	4	W	W	W	1	7	13	22	105	17
2 Everett (R)	W	W	W	R	W	R	2	4	W	W	R	3	6	33	6	15	29
3 Browder (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	W	W	R	7	2	78	41	23	64
4 Bevill (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	W	R	W	5	4	56	233	143	62
5 Cramer (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	W	R	W	7	2	78	34	11	76
6 Bachus (R)	W	R	W	W	W	R	2	4	W	W	W	2	7	22	2	19	10
7 Hilliard (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	21	0	100
Alaska																	
Young, Don (R)	W	R	W	R	W	R	3	3	W	W	W	3	6	33	142	172	45
Arizona																	
1 Coppersmith (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	W	W	5	4	56	13	8	62
2 Pastor (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	32	5	86
3 Stump (R)	W	W	W	W	W	R	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	18	251	7
4 Kyl (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	7	91	7
5 Kolbe (R)	R	W	W	W	W	W	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	13	117	10
6 English, Karan (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	W	W	5	4	56	16	5	76
Arkansas																	
1 Lambert (D)	R	W	W	R	R	W	3	3	W	W	W	3	6	33	12	9	57
2 Thornton (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	38	6	86
3 Hutchinson (R)	W	W	W	W	W	R	1	5	W	W	R	2	7	22	2	19	10
4 Dickey (R)	W	W	W	W	W	R	1	5	W	W	R	2	7	22	3	18	14
California																	
1 Hamburg (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	21	0	100
2 Herger (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	A	0	8	0	15	82	15
3 Fazio (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	205	27	88
4 Doolittle (R)	W	W	W	W	W	R	1	5	W	A	W	1	7	13	5	38	12
5 Matsui (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	R	R	W	6	3	67	198	32	86
6 Woolsey (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	21	0	100
7 Miller, George (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	278	29	91
8 Pelosi (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	89	6	94
9 Dellums (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	340	24	93
10 Baker, Bill (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	R	1	8	11	1	20	5
11 Pombo (R)	W	W	A	R	W	R	2	3	W	W	W	2	6	25	3	17	15
12 Lantos (D)	R	R	R	R	A	R	5	0	W	R	R	7	1	88	179	10	95
13 Stark (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	A	8	0	100	295	31	90
14 Eshoo (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	19	2	90
15 Mineta (D)	R	R	R	R	A	W	4	1	R	R	W	6	2	75	282	33	90
16 Edwards, Don (D)	R	R	R	W	R	R	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	386	23	94
17 Farr (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	A	R	R	7	1	88	12	2	86
18 Condit (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	W	W	W	6	3	67	48	14	77
19 Lehman (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	W	W	6	3	67	141	15	90
20 Dooley (D)	R	W	W	W	R	W	2	4	W	W	W	2	7	22	28	17	62
21 Thomas, William (R)	R	A	W	W	R	W	2	3	W	A	W	2	5	29	30	191	14
22 Huffington (R)	R	W	W	W	R	W	2	4	W	W	W	2	7	22	4	17	19
23 Gallegly (R)	R	W	W	W	A	R	2	3	W	W	W	2	6	25	16	81	16
24 Beilenson (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	203	69	75
25 McKeon (R)	R	W	W	W	W	W	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	2	19	10
26 Berman (D)	R	R	R	R	A	W	4	1	R	R	R	7	1	88	134	19	88
27 Moorhead (R)	W	W	W	W	W	R	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	26	311	8
28 Dreier, David (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	3	189	2
29 Waxman (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	276	34	89
30 Becerra (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	18	3	86
31 Martinez (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	R	W	6	3	67	157	7	96
32 Dixon (D)	R	A	R	R	R	W	4	1	R	R	R	7	1	88	216	9	96
33 Roybal-Allard (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	18	3	86
34 Torres (D)	R	A	R	R	R	W	4	1	R	R	W	6	2	75	150	7	96
35 Waters (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	42	2	95
36 Harman (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	R	W	6	3	67	17	4	81
37 Tucker (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	W	8	1	89	20	1	95
38 Horn (R)	R	W	W	W	R	W	2	4	W	W	R	3	6	33	10	11	48
39 Royce (R)	W	W	W	W	W	R	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	2	19	10
40 Lewis, Jerry (R)	W	W	W	R	W	W	1	5	W	A	W	1	7	13	31	186	14
41 Kim (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	0	21	0
42 Brown, George (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	324	35	90
43 Calvert (R)	W	W	W	R	A	W	1	4	W	W	W	1	7	13	1	19	5
44 McCandless (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	6	149	4
45 Rohrabacher (R)	W	W	W	W	W	R	1	5	W	W	R	2	7	22	9	59	13
46 Dornan (R)	W	W	W	R	W	R	2	4	W	W	R	3	6	33	23	209	10
47 Cox (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	R	1	8	11	5	62	7
48 Packard (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	10	146	6
49 Schenk (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	W	W	5	4	56	16	5	76
50 Filner (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	19	2	90
51 Cunningham (R)	W	W	W	R	R	W	2	4	W	W	W	2	7	22	6	39	13
52 Hunter (R)	W	W	W	R	W	R	2	4	W	W	R	3	6	33	40	148	21
Colorado																	
1 Schroeder (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	R	R	R	7	2	78	259	75	78
2 Skaggs (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	R	R	W	6	3	67	80	18	82
3 McInnis (R)	W	W	W	W	W	R	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	2	19	10
4 Allard (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	1	42	2
5 Hefley (R)	W	W	W	W	W	R	1	5	W	W	R	2	7	22	12	86	12
6 Schaefer (R)	W	W	W	R	W	R	2	4	W	W	W	2	7	22	30	124	19
Connecticut																	
1 Kennelly (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	R	R	W	6	3	67	161	19	89
2 Gejdenson (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	186	8	96
3 DeLauro (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	41	4	91
4 Shays (R)	R	W	W	W	R	W	2	4	W	W	W	2	7	22	50	42	54
5 Franks, Gary (R)	R	W	W	R	R	W	3	3	W	A	W	3	5	38	10	34	23
6 Johnson, Nancy (R)	R	W	W	W	R	W	2	4	W	W	W	2	7	22	74	84	47
Delaware																	
Castle (R)	R	W	W	R	R	W	3	3	W	W	W	3	6	33	6	14	30
Florida																	
1 Hutto (D)	W	W	W	R	A	W	1	4	W	R	R	3	5	38	83	144	37
2 Peterson, Pete (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	R	W	6	3	67	34	10	77
3 Brown, Corrine (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	19	2	90
4 Fowler (R)	R	W	W	R	W	W	2	4	W	W	W	2	7	22	2	19	10
5 Thurman (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	W	8	1	89	20	1	95
6 Stearns (R)	W	W	W	W	W	R	1	5	W	W	R	2	7	22	10	56	15
7 Mica (R)	W	W	W	R	W	R	2	4	W	W	W	2	7	22	3	18	14
8 McCollum (R)	W	W	W	R	W	W	1	5	W	W	A	1	7	13	17	172	9
9 Bilirakis (R)	R	W	W	R	W	R	3	3	W	R	R	5	4	56	39	119	25
10 Young, Bill (R)	R	W	W	W	W	W	1	5	W	R	R	3	6	33	60	305	16
11 Gibbons (D)	R	R	R	W	A	W	3	2	R	R	W	5	3	63	224	173	56
12 Canady (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	1	20	5
13 Miller (R)	W	W	W	R	W	W	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	3	18	14
14 Goss (R)	W	W	W	R	W	W	1	5	W	R	W	2	7	22	10	59	14
15 Bacchus (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	R	W	6	3	67	32	11	74
16 Lewis, Tom (R)	W	A	W	W	W	W	0	5	W	W	W	0	8	0	20	137	13
17 Meek (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	18	3	86
18 Ros-Lehtinen (R)	R	R	W	R	R	R	5	1	W	W	R	6	3	67	29	33	47
19 Johnston (D)	R	R	R	R	A	W	4	1	W	R	W	5	3	63	54	13	81
20 Deutsch (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	R	W	6	3	67	18	3	86
21 Diaz-Balart (R)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	W	W	R	7	2	78	17	4	81
22 Shaw (R)	R	W	W	W	A	W	1	4	W	W	W	1	7	13	24	169	12
23 Hastings (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	A	R	W	7	1	88	18	2	90
Georgia																	
1 Kingston (R)	W	W	W	W	W	R	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	2	19	10
2 Bishop (D)	R	R	W	R	R	W	4	2	W	R	W	5	4	56	17	4	81
3 Collins (R)	W	W	W	W	W	R	1	5	W	W	R	2	7	22	5	16	24
4 Linder (R)	W	W	W	R	W	W	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	1	20	5
5 Lewis, John (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	97	2	98
6 Gingrich (R)	W	W	W	R	A	W	1	4	W	W	W	1	7	13	23	203	10
7 Darden (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	R	W	6	3	67	77	68	53
8 Rowland (D)	R	R	W	W	R	W	3	3	W	R	W	4	5	44	73	85	46
9 Deal (D)	R	W	W	R	W	R	3	3	W	W	W	3	6	33	8	13	38
10 Johnson, Don (D)	R	R	W	R	R	W	4	2	W	W	W	4	5	44	11	10	52
11 McKinney (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	21	0	100
Hawaii																	
1 Abercrombie (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	41	2	95
2 Mink (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	49	0	100

	Education: Goals 2000	Black Lung Benefits	OSHA-MSHA Budget Raid	Maritime Security Act	Education: Neighborhood Schools	GATT	Labor Votes		Balanced Budget Amendment	Budget Resolution	China MFN	Total All Votes 1994		1994 Percentage	Lifetime Voting Record		Lifetime Right Percentage
	1	2	3	4	5	6	R	W	7	8	9	R	W	%	R	W	%
Idaho																	
1 LaRocco (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	W	W	W	4	5	44	30	14	68
2 Crapo (R)	W	W	W	W	W	R	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	2	19	10
Illinois																	
1 Rush (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	W	8	1	89	20	1	95
2 Reynolds (D)	R	R	A	W	R	W	3	2	R	R	W	5	3	63	16	4	80
3 Lipinski (D)	R	R	R	R	A	R	5	0	W	R	R	7	1	88	132	20	87
4 Gutierrez (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	21	0	100
5 Rostenkowski (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	R	R	W	6	3	67	359	58	86
6 Hyde (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	R	1	8	11	51	266	16
7 Collins, Cardiss (D)	R	R	R	W	R	R	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	306	14	96
8 Crane (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	18	331	5
9 Yates (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	408	35	92
10 Porter (R)	W	R	W	W	R	W	2	4	W	W	R	3	6	33	30	173	15
11 Sangmeister (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	R	W	6	3	67	57	11	84
12 Costello (D)	R	R	R	W	R	R	5	1	W	R	R	7	2	78	65	8	89
13 Fawell (R)	R	W	W	W	W	W	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	10	120	8
14 Hastert (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	12	87	12
15 Ewing (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	5	36	12
16 Manzullo (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	0	21	0
17 Evans (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	153	6	96
18 Michel (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	A	W	W	0	8	0	51	384	12
19 Poshard (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	W	W	R	5	4	56	57	12	83
20 Durbin (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	R	R	R	7	2	78	140	20	88
Indiana																	
1 Visclosky (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	116	14	89
2 Sharp (D)	R	R	R	A	R	W	4	1	W	R	R	6	2	75	243	76	76
3 Roemer (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	W	W	5	4	56	28	16	64
4 Long (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	W	R	W	5	4	56	49	18	73
5 Buyer (R)	W	W	W	R	W	W	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	3	18	14
6 Burton (R)	W	W	W	W	W	R	1	5	W	W	R	2	7	22	21	136	13
7 Myers (R)	W	R	W	W	R	W	3	3	W	W	W	3	6	33	65	318	17
8 McCloskey (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	R	R	7	2	78	142	18	89
9 Hamilton (D)	R	R	W	W	R	W	3	3	R	W	W	4	5	44	171	131	57
10 Jacobs (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	W	R	W	5	4	56	286	93	75
Iowa																	
1 Leach (R)	R	W	W	W	R	W	2	4	W	W	W	2	7	22	95	180	35
2 Nussle (R)	R	W	W	W	R	W	2	4	W	W	W	2	7	22	7	38	16
3 Lightfoot (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	14	115	11
4 Smith, Neal (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	R	R	W	6	3	67	332	87	79
5 Grandy (R)	R	A	W	W	A	W	1	3	A	A	W	1	4	20	20	75	21
Kansas																	
1 Roberts (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	10	182	5
2 Slattery (D)	R	A	R	A	A	W	2	1	R	R	W	4	2	67	105	51	67
3 Meyers (R)	R	W	W	W	R	W	2	4	W	W	W	2	7	22	24	103	19
4 Glickman (D)	R	R	R	W	R	R	5	1	W	R	W	6	3	67	179	96	65
Kentucky																	
1 Barlow (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	W	8	1	89	19	2	90
2 Natcher (D)	I	I	W	W	W	R	1	3	I	I	R	2	3	40	2	3	40
3 Mazzoli (D)	A	R	R	R	R	W	4	1	W	R	R	6	2	75	236	121	66
4 Bunning (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	R	1	8	11	11	86	11
5 Rogers (R)	R	R	W	W	R	R	4	2	W	W	R	5	4	56	57	138	29
6 Baesler (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	W	R	W	5	4	56	14	7	67
Louisiana																	
1 Livingston (R)	W	A	W	R	W	R	2	3	W	W	W	2	6	25	33	250	12
2 Jefferson (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	40	5	89
3 Tauzin (D)	R	W	W	R	R	W	3	3	W	W	W	3	6	33	81	109	43
4 Fields, Cleo (D)	R	R	R	R	A	R	5	0	R	R	R	8	0	100	20	0	100
5 McCrery (R)	W	W	W	R	A	W	1	4	W	W	W	1	7	13	7	69	9
6 Baker (R)	W	W	W	R	A	W	1	4	W	W	W	1	7	13	11	83	12
7 Hayes (D)	R	W	W	R	A	R	3	2	W	W	W	3	5	38	57	38	60
Maine																	
1 Andrews, Thomas (D)	R	R	W	R	R	R	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	42	3	93
2 Snowe (R)	R	W	W	R	R	R	4	2	W	W	R	5	4	56	110	123	47
Maryland																	
1 Gilchrest (R)	R	W	W	R	W	W	2	4	W	W	W	2	7	22	12	32	27
2 Bentley (R)	R	R	W	R	W	R	4	2	W	W	A	4	4	50	61	65	48
3 Cardin (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	91	8	92
4 Wynn (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	20	1	95
5 Hoyer (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	R	R	7	2	78	176	14	93
6 Bartlett (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	2	18	10
7 Mfume (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	97	2	98
8 Morella (R)	R	R	W	R	R	W	4	2	W	R	W	5	4	56	61	38	62
Massachusetts																	
1 Olver (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	39	2	95
2 Neal, Richard (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	60	3	95
3 Blute (R)	R	R	W	R	R	R	5	1	W	W	W	5	4	56	11	10	52
4 Frank (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	178	16	92
5 Meehan (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	W	R	6	3	67	16	5	76
6 Torkildsen (R)	R	W	W	R	R	W	3	3	W	W	W	3	6	33	8	13	38
7 Markey (D)	R	A	R	R	R	W	4	1	R	R	R	7	1	88	248	24	91
8 Kennedy (D)	A	R	R	R	R	W	4	1	W	R	R	6	2	75	90	8	92
9 Moakley (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	315	19	94
10 Studds (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	313	30	91
Michigan																	
1 Stupak (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	21	0	100
2 Hoekstra (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	1	20	5
3 Henry (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	0	9	0
4 Camp (R)	R	W	W	W	W	W	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	5	40	11
5 Barcia (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	W	R	W	7	2	78	19	2	90
6 Upton (R)	R	W	W	R	W	W	2	4	W	W	R	3	6	33	28	71	28
7 Smith, Nick (R)	R	W	W	A	W	W	1	4	W	W	W	1	7	13	2	17	11
8 Carr (D)	R	R	R	A	R	W	4	1	W	R	W	5	3	63	237	55	81
9 Kildee (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	263	13	95
10 Bonior (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	254	14	95
11 Knollenberg (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	0	21	0
12 Levin (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	152	8	95
13 Ford, William (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	374	11	97
14 Conyers (D)	R	R	R	A	R	R	5	0	R	R	R	8	0	100	335	26	93
15 Collins, Barbara (D)	R	R	R	A	R	R	5	0	R	R	R	8	0	100	41	1	98
16 Dingell (D)	R	R	R	A	R	W	4	1	R	R	W	6	2	75	400	33	92
Minnesota																	
1 Penny (D)	W	W	W	W	R	W	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	84	76	53
2 Minge (D)	R	W	R	W	R	W	3	3	W	W	W	3	6	33	12	9	57
3 Ramstad (R)	R	W	W	W	W	W	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	14	31	31
4 Vento (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	254	20	93
5 Sabo (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	W	8	1	89	216	18	92
6 Grams (R)	W	W	W	W	A	W	0	5	W	W	W	0	8	0	0	20	0
7 Peterson, Collin (D)	R	R	W	W	R	R	4	2	W	W	W	4	5	44	31	14	69
8 Oberstar (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	W	8	1	89	294	23	93

Key:

R = Voted right or was paired right.
W = Voted wrong or was paired wrong.
A = Absent and not paired or voted "present."
I = Not in Congress at time.
Number before each name shows congressional district.

VOTED IN THE HOUSE IN 1994

	Education: Goals 2000	Black Lung Benefits	OSHA-MSHA Budget Raid	Maritime Security Act	Education: Neighborhood Schools	GATT	Labor Votes		Balanced Budget Amendment	Budget Resolution	China MFN	Total All Votes 1994		1994 Percentage	Lifetime Voting Record		Lifetime Right Percentage
	1	2	3	4	5	6	R	W	7	8	9	R	W	%	R	W	%
Mississippi																	
1 Whitten (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	R	A	6	2	75	219	233	48
2 Thompson (D)	R	R	R	R	A	R	5	0	R	R	W	7	1	88	14	1	93
3 Montgomery (D)	R	W	W	A	R	R	3	2	W	R	W	4	4	50	68	315	18
4 Parker (D)	R	A	W	R	R	W	3	2	W	R	W	4	4	50	21	46	31
5 Taylor, Gene (D)	W	W	W	R	R	R	3	3	W	R	R	5	4	56	27	31	47
Missouri																	
1 Clay (D)	R	R	R	A	R	R	5	0	R	R	R	8	0	100	325	14	96
2 Talent (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	1	20	5
3 Gephardt (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	221	39	85
4 Skelton (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	W	R	W	5	4	56	176	86	67
5 Wheat (D)	R	R	R	A	A	W	3	1	R	R	W	5	2	71	150	7	96
6 Danner (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	W	R	W	7	2	78	18	3	86
7 Hancock (R)	W	W	W	W	W	R	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	6	63	9
8 Emerson (R)	W	A	W	W	W	W	0	5	W	W	W	0	8	0	44	147	23
9 Volkmer (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	W	R	W	7	2	78	202	70	74
Montana																	
Williams (D)	R	R	R	W	R	R	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	200	26	88
Nebraska																	
1 Bereuter (R)	R	W	W	W	W	W	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	47	187	20
2 Hoagland (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	W	W	5	4	56	55	14	80
3 Barrett (R)	R	W	W	W	W	W	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	5	40	11
Nevada																	
1 Bilbray (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	W	R	R	8	1	89	87	12	88
2 Vucanovich (R)	W	W	W	R	R	W	2	4	W	W	W	2	7	22	18	140	11
New Hampshire																	
1 Zeliff (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	5	39	11
2 Swett (D)	R	R	W	R	R	R	5	1	W	W	R	6	3	67	37	8	82
New Jersey																	
1 Andrews, Robert (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	W	W	W	6	3	67	37	8	82
2 Hughes (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	248	71	78
3 Saxton (R)	R	W	W	R	W	W	2	4	W	W	W	2	7	22	46	83	36
4 Smith, Christopher (R)	W	R	W	R	R	R	4	2	W	W	R	5	4	56	139	56	71
5 Roukema (R)	W	W	W	R	A	W	1	4	W	A	A	1	5	17	66	122	35
6 Pallone (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	W	W	R	7	2	78	60	9	87
7 Franks (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	A	0	8	0	6	14	30
8 Klein (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	R	R	W	6	3	67	17	4	81
9 Torricelli (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	R	R	7	2	78	142	10	93
10 Payne, Donald (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	A	R	R	8	0	100	64	1	98
11 Gallo (R)	A	W	W	W	A	I	0	3	A	A	A	0	3	0	41	81	34
12 Zimmer (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	14	31	31
13 Menendez (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	20	1	95
New Mexico																	
1 Schiff (R)	R	W	W	R	W	R	3	3	W	W	R	4	5	44	21	48	30
2 Skeen (R)	W	W	W	W	W	R	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	27	168	14
3 Richardson (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	R	R	7	2	78	141	18	89
New York																	
1 Hochbrueckner (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	95	3	97
2 Lazio (R)	R	W	W	R	R	W	3	3	W	W	W	3	6	33	10	11	48
3 King (R)	W	W	W	R	W	W	1	5	W	W	R	2	7	22	7	14	33
4 Levy (R)	W	W	W	R	W	W	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	6	15	29
5 Ackerman (D)	R	R	R	A	A	W	3	1	R	R	W	5	2	71	146	4	97
6 Flake (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	91	5	95
7 Manton (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	A	R	W	6	2	75	117	8	94
8 Nadler (D)	R	A	R	R	R	R	5	0	R	R	R	8	0	100	20	0	100
9 Schumer (D)	R	R	A	R	R	W	4	1	R	R	W	6	2	75	170	17	91
10 Towns (D)	R	R	R	R	A	R	5	0	R	R	R	8	0	100	146	3	98
11 Owens (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	152	2	99
12 Velazquez (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	21	0	100
13 Molinari (R)	R	W	W	R	R	W	3	3	W	W	R	4	5	44	27	28	49
14 Maloney (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	19	2	90
15 Rangel (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	336	18	95
16 Serrano (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	50	3	94
17 Engel (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	66	1	99
18 Lowey (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	66	3	96
19 Fish (R)	R	R	W	R	R	W	4	2	W	A	R	5	3	63	183	185	50
20 Gilman (R)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	261	78	77
21 McNulty (D)	R	R	R	R	A	W	4	1	W	R	W	5	3	63	62	5	93
22 Solomon (R)	W	W	W	R	A	R	2	3	W	W	R	3	5	38	64	159	29
23 Boehlert (R)	R	R	W	R	R	W	4	2	W	R	R	6	3	67	112	48	70
24 McHugh (R)	W	R	W	R	W	R	3	3	W	W	W	3	6	33	10	11	48
25 Walsh (R)	R	R	W	R	R	W	4	2	W	W	W	4	5	44	35	34	51
26 Hinchey (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	21	0	100
27 Paxon (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	8	61	12
28 Slaughter (D)	R	R	R	A	R	W	4	1	R	R	W	6	2	75	91	6	94
29 LaFalce (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	263	49	84
30 Quinn (R)	R	R	W	R	R	R	5	1	W	W	W	5	4	56	13	8	62
31 Houghton (R)	R	W	W	W	W	W	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	35	62	36
North Carolina																	
1 Clayton (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	20	1	95
2 Valentine (D)	R	W	A	W	R	W	2	3	W	R	W	3	5	38	69	88	44
3 Lancaster (D)	R	R	W	R	R	W	4	2	W	R	R	6	3	67	60	39	61
4 Price (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	81	18	82
5 Neal, Stephen (D)	R	A	R	R	R	W	4	1	W	R	W	5	3	63	169	135	56
6 Coble (R)	W	W	W	R	W	R	2	4	W	W	W	2	7	22	21	109	16
7 Rose (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	221	99	69
8 Hefner (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	W	R	R	8	1	89	184	122	60
9 McMillan (R)	R	W	W	W	A	W	1	4	W	W	W	1	7	13	23	106	18
10 Ballenger (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	12	85	12
11 Taylor, Charles (R)	W	W	W	R	W	R	2	4	W	W	R	3	6	33	9	36	20
12 Watt (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	21	0	100
North Dakota																	
Pomeroy (D)	R	A	W	W	R	W	2	3	R	W	W	3	5	38	14	6	70
Ohio																	
1 Mann (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	W	W	5	4	56	11	9	55
2 Portman (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	0	16	0
3 Hall, Tony (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	R	R	R	7	2	78	184	43	81
4 Oxley (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	15	173	8
5 Gillmor (R)	R	W	W	R	R	W	3	3	W	W	W	3	6	33	17	50	25
6 Strickland (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	21	0	100
7 Hobson (R)	R	W	W	W	W	W	1	5	W	W	R	2	7	22	11	34	24
8 Boehner (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	2	43	4
9 Kaptur (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	A	R	8	0	100	142	12	92
10 Hoke (R)	W	A	W	R	W	W	1	4	W	W	W	1	7	13	4	16	20
11 Stokes (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	339	17	95
12 Kasich (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	R	1	8	11	25	134	16
13 Brown, Sherrod (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	W	W	R	7	2	78	19	2	90
14 Sawyer (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	89	10	90
15 Pryce (R)	W	W	W	R	W	W	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	2	19	10
16 Regula (R)	R	W	W	W	W	W	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	129	217	37
17 Traficant (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	125	3	98
18 Applegate (D)	R	R	R	R	A	R	5	0	R	R	R	8	0	100	219	56	80
19 Fingerhut (D)	W	R	R	R	R	W	4	2	W	W	W	4	5	44	14	7	67
Oklahoma																	
1 Largent (R)	I	I	I	I	I	R	1	0	I	I	I	1	0	—	1	0	—
1 Inhofe (R)	W	W	W	A	A	I	0	3	W	W	W	0	6	0	13	80	14
2 Synar (D)	R	R	R	R	A	W	4	1	R	R	W	6	2	75	156	75	68
3 Brewster (D)	R	R	W	W	R	W	3	3	W	W	W	3	6	33	23	22	51
4 McCurdy (D)	R	W	W	W	A	W	1	4	W	R	W	2	6	25	87	95	48
5 Istook (R)	W	W	W	W	W	R	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	1	20	5
6 English, Glenn (D)	I	W	W	W	W	R	1	4	I	I	W	1	5	17	1	5	17
Oregon																	
1 Furse (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	19	2	90
2 Smith, Robert F. (R)	W	W	W	W	A	W	0	5	W	W	W	0	8	0	22	137	14
3 Wyden (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	158	35	82
4 DeFazio (D)	R	R	R	A	R	R	5	0	W	W	R	6	2	75	86	10	90
5 Kopetski (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	R	R	W	6	3	67	35	10	78

	Education: Goals 2000	Black Lung Benefits	OSHA-MSHA Budget Raid	Maritime Security Act	Education: Neighborhood Schools	GATT	Labor Votes		Balanced Budget Amendment	Budget Resolution	China MFN	Total All Votes 1994		1994 Percentage	Lifetime Voting Record		Lifetime Right Percentage
	1	2	3	4	5	6	R	W	7	8	9	R	W	%	R	W	%
Pennsylvania																	
1 Foglietta (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	178	8	96
2 Blackwell (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	A	R	7	1	88	34	1	97
3 Borski (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	149	7	96
4 Klink (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	20	1	95
5 Clinger (R)	R	R	W	R	W	W	3	3	W	W	W	3	6	33	84	144	37
6 Holden (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	20	1	95
7 Weldon (R)	R	W	W	R	W	W	2	4	W	W	R	3	6	33	52	40	57
8 Greenwood (R)	R	W	W	W	W	W	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	2	19	10
9 Shuster (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	59	275	18
10 McDade (R)	R	R	W	R	A	W	3	2	W	W	W	3	5	38	266	128	68
11 Kanjorski (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	W	8	1	89	118	12	91
12 Murtha (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	285	41	87
13 Margolies-Mezvinsky(D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	R	W	R	6	3	67	16	5	76
14 Coyne (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	186	9	95
15 McHale (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	W	R	6	3	67	17	4	81
16 Walker (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	35	241	13
17 Gekas (R)	W	W	W	R	W	W	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	26	133	16
18 Santorum (R)	R	R	W	W	W	W	2	4	W	W	W	2	7	22	20	25	44
19 Goodling (R)	R	W	W	R	W	W	2	4	W	W	R	3	6	33	82	225	27
20 Murphy (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	A	W	7	1	88	222	46	83
21 Ridge (R)	A	R	W	R	W	W	2	3	W	A	W	2	5	29	81	76	52
Rhode Island																	
1 Machtley (R)	R	W	A	R	R	W	3	2	W	W	W	3	5	38	36	32	53
2 Reed (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	41	4	91
South Carolina																	
1 Ravenel (R)	W	W	W	R	A	R	2	3	W	W	A	2	5	29	38	59	39
2 Spence (R)	W	W	W	R	W	R	2	4	W	W	R	3	6	33	65	293	18
3 Derrick (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	R	W	6	3	67	185	129	59
4 Inglis (R)	W	W	W	W	W	R	1	5	W	W	R	2	7	22	3	18	14
5 Spratt (D)	R	R	R	R	A	R	5	0	W	R	R	7	1	88	105	52	67
6 Clyburn (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	A	7	1	88	19	1	95
South Dakota																	
Johnson, Timothy P.(D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	R	W	6	3	67	81	18	82
Tennessee																	
1 Quillen (R)	W	R	R	R	A	W	3	2	W	A	W	3	4	43	79	318	20
2 Duncan, Jr. (R)	W	W	W	W	W	R	1	5	W	W	R	2	7	22	20	49	29
3 Lloyd (D)	R	R	W	R	R	W	4	2	W	R	W	5	4	56	190	120	61
4 Cooper (D)	R	R	W	W	R	W	3	3	W	W	W	3	6	33	100	57	64
5 Clement (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	W	W	5	4	56	59	19	76
6 Gordon (D)	R	R	W	W	A	W	2	3	W	W	W	2	6	25	101	26	80
7 Sundquist (R)	W	R	W	W	A	W	1	4	W	W	W	1	7	13	26	129	17
8 Tanner (D)	R	R	W	W	R	W	3	3	W	R	W	4	5	44	40	29	58
9 Ford, Harold (D)	R	R	R	A	R	W	4	1	R	R	R	7	1	88	166	22	88
Texas																	
1 Chapman (D)	R	R	A	R	R	R	5	0	W	R	W	6	2	75	80	41	66
2 Wilson (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	R	W	6	3	67	226	92	71
3 Johnson, Sam (R)	W	W	W	W	W	R	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	4	40	9
4 Hall, Ralph (D)	R	W	W	R	R	R	4	2	W	W	W	4	5	44	66	123	35
5 Bryant (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	R	W	6	3	67	140	14	91
6 Barton (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	A	R	1	7	13	8	115	7
7 Archer (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	16	350	4
8 Fields, Jack (R)	W	W	W	R	W	W	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	15	178	8
9 Brooks (D)	R	R	R	R	A	W	4	1	R	R	W	6	2	75	344	95	78
10 Pickle (D)	A	R	W	W	R	W	2	3	W	R	W	3	5	38	216	181	54
11 Edwards, Chet (D)	R	R	W	W	R	W	3	3	W	R	W	4	5	44	30	15	67
12 Geren (D)	W	W	W	R	R	W	2	4	W	R	W	3	6	33	28	33	46
13 Sarpalius (D)	R	R	W	R	R	W	4	2	W	R	W	5	4	56	35	33	51
14 Laughlin (D)	R	R	R	A	R	W	4	1	W	R	W	5	3	63	31	30	51
15 De La Garza (D)	R	R	W	R	R	W	4	2	W	R	W	5	4	56	239	142	63
16 Coleman (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	137	20	87
17 Stenholm (D)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	43	187	19
18 Washington (D)	R	A	R	A	A	W	2	1	R	A	R	4	1	80	47	3	94
19 Combest (R)	W	W	W	W	W	R	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	16	114	12
20 Gonzalez (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	381	35	92
21 Smith, Lamar (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	R	1	8	11	16	81	16
22 De Lay (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	4	124	3
23 Bonilla (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	0	21	0
24 Frost (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	R	W	6	3	67	179	41	81
25 Andrews, Mike (D)	R	R	W	W	R	W	3	3	W	W	W	3	6	33	99	58	63
26 Armey (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	3	127	2
27 Ortiz (D)	R	R	W	R	R	W	4	2	W	R	W	5	4	56	126	28	82
28 Tejeda (D)	R	R	W	R	R	W	4	2	R	R	W	6	3	67	16	5	76
29 Green (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	A	R	R	7	1	88	19	1	95
30 Johnson, Eddie (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	18	3	86
Utah																	
1 Hansen (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	8	179	4
2 Shepherd (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	W	R	R	6	3	67	17	4	81
3 Orton (D)	R	W	R	W	R	W	3	3	W	W	W	3	6	33	20	25	44
Vermont																	
Sanders (I)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	45	0	100
Virginia																	
1 Bateman (R)	R	W	W	R	W	W	2	4	W	W	W	2	7	22	18	141	11
2 Pickett (D)	R	W	W	R	R	W	3	3	R	R	W	5	4	56	59	40	60
3 Scott (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	20	1	95
4 Sisisky (D)	R	R	W	R	R	R	5	1	W	R	W	6	3	67	102	56	65
5 Payne, Lewis (D)	R	W	W	W	R	R	3	3	W	W	W	3	6	33	37	37	50
6 Goodlatte (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	1	20	5
7 Bliley (R)	W	W	W	R	W	W	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	26	169	13
8 Moran (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	R	W	6	3	67	35	9	80
9 Boucher (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	R	R	W	6	3	67	128	27	83
10 Wolf (R)	W	W	W	R	W	R	2	4	W	W	R	3	6	33	35	159	18
11 Byrne (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	20	1	95
Washington																	
1 Cantwell (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	W	W	6	3	67	16	5	76
2 Swift (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	195	38	84
3 Unsoeld (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	66	1	99
4 Inslee (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	W	W	5	4	56	13	8	62
5 Foley (D)	S	S	S	S	R	W	1	1	S	R	S	2	1	67	274	68	80
6 Dicks (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	227	43	84
7 McDermott (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	61	8	88
8 Dunn (R)	W	W	W	R	W	W	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	1	19	5
9 Kreidler (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	18	3	86
West Virginia																	
1 Mollohan (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	W	8	1	89	150	9	94
2 Wise (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	W	8	1	89	149	9	94
3 Rahall (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	R	9	0	100	243	25	91
Wisconsin																	
1 Barca (D)	R	R	R	W	W	R	4	2	R	W	W	5	4	56	11	5	69
2 Klug (R)	R	W	W	W	R	R	3	3	W	W	R	4	5	44	16	29	36
3 Gunderson (R)	R	W	W	W	W	R	2	4	W	W	R	3	6	33	58	133	30
4 Kleczka (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	W	7	2	78	119	21	85
5 Barrett, Thomas (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	19	2	90
6 Petri (R)	R	W	W	W	W	W	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	54	177	23
7 Obey (D)	R	R	R	R	W	R	5	1	R	R	R	8	1	89	328	45	88
8 Roth (R)	W	W	W	W	W	R	1	5	W	W	W	1	8	11	30	194	13
9 Sensenbrenner (R)	W	W	W	W	W	R	1	5	W	W	R	2	7	22	22	208	10
Wyoming																	
Thomas, Craig (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	W	0	9	0	7	47	13

HOW YOUR SENATORS VOTED

	1 Federal Worker Buyouts	2 Education: Goals 2000	3 Davis-Bacon	4 Product Liability	5 Workplace Fairness	6 GATT	Labor Vote R	Labor Vote W	7 Balanced Budget Amendment	8 Unfunded Mandates	Total All Votes 1994 R	Total All Votes 1994 W	1994 Percentage %	Lifetime Voting Record R	Lifetime Voting Record W	Lifetime Right Percentage %
Alabama																
Heflin (D)	R	R	W	R	R	R	5	1	W	W	5	3	63	149	79	65
Shelby (D)	R	R	A	R	R	R	5	0	W	A	5	1	83	63	21	75
Alaska																
Murkowski (R)	W	A	W	W	W	W	0	5	W	W	0	7	0	45	138	25
Stevens (R)	R	A	W	W	W	R	2	3	R	W	3	4	43	147	194	43
Arizona																
DeConcini (D)	R	R	R	A	R	W	4	1	W	R	5	2	71	167	88	65
McCain (R)	W	A	W	W	W	W	0	5	W	W	0	7	0	14	71	16
Arkansas																
Bumpers (D)	R	R	W	R	W	W	3	3	R	R	5	3	63	204	100	67
Pryor (D)	R	R	W	W	W	W	2	4	R	R	4	4	50	138	82	63
California																
Boxer (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	7	1	88	17	2	89
Feinstein (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	W	R	5	3	63	16	3	84
Colorado																
Brown (R)	W	W	W	W	W	R	1	5	W	W	1	7	13	6	37	14
Campbell (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	W	R	7	1	88	15	3	83
Connecticut																
Dodd (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	R	R	6	2	75	171	16	91
Lieberman (D)	R	A	R	W	R	W	3	2	R	R	5	2	71	50	11	82
Delaware																
Biden (D)	A	R	R	R	R	W	4	1	R	R	6	1	86	251	54	82
Roth (R)	W	R	W	R	W	W	2	4	W	R	3	5	38	72	276	21
Florida																
Graham (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	R	6	2	75	67	19	78
Mack (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	0	8	0	10	51	16
Georgia																
Coverdell (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	0	8	0	0	19	0
Nunn (D)	R	R	W	W	W	W	2	4	W	W	2	6	25	152	190	44
Hawaii																
Akaka (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	7	1	88	46	5	90
Inouye (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	7	1	88	319	36	90
Idaho																
Craig (R)	W	W	W	W	W	R	1	5	W	W	1	7	13	8	35	19
Kempthorne (R)	W	W	W	W	W	R	1	5	W	W	1	7	13	2	17	11
Illinois																
Moseley-Braun (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	R	6	2	75	14	5	74
Simon (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	R	6	2	75	95	18	84
Indiana																
Coats (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	0	8	0	13	49	21
Lugar (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	0	8	0	28	241	10
Iowa																
Grassley (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	0	8	0	33	161	17
Harkin (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	7	1	88	105	13	89
Kansas																
Dole (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	0	8	0	55	296	16
Kassebaum (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	R	W	1	7	13	44	181	20
Kentucky																
Ford (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	R	6	2	75	240	68	78
McConnell (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	0	8	0	19	100	16
Louisiana																
Breaux (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	W	5	3	63	67	18	79
Johnston (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	W	6	2	75	172	138	55
Maine																
Cohen (R)	W	A	W	R	W	W	1	4	W	R	2	5	29	86	142	38
Mitchell (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	7	1	88	175	29	86
Maryland																
Mikulski (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	R	R	6	2	75	76	7	92
Sarbanes (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	7	1	88	253	12	95
Massachusetts																
Kennedy (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	7	1	88	338	29	92
Kerry (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	7	1	88	110	11	91
Michigan																
Levin (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	7	1	88	212	19	92
Riegle (D)	R	R	A	R	R	W	4	1	R	R	6	1	86	245	19	93
Minnesota																
Durenberger (R)	W	R	R	W	W	W	2	4	W	R	3	5	38	98	121	45
Wellstone (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	8	0	100	38	5	88
Mississippi																
Cochran (R)	W	W	W	R	W	W	1	5	W	W	1	7	13	36	191	16
Lott (R)	W	A	W	W	W	W	0	5	W	W	0	7	0	10	50	17
Missouri																
Bond (R)	W	R	W	W	W	W	1	5	W	W	1	7	13	18	60	23
Danforth (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	0	8	0	79	188	30
Montana																
Baucus (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	8	0	100	171	57	75
Burns (R)	W	W	W	W	W	R	1	5	W	W	1	7	13	9	53	15
Nebraska																
Exon (D)	R	R	W	W	R	R	4	2	W	R	5	3	63	119	101	54
Kerrey (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	7	1	88	47	11	81
Nevada																
Bryan (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	W	R	7	1	88	50	12	81
Reid (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	8	0	100	73	11	87
New Hampshire																
Gregg (R)	W	A	W	W	W	W	0	5	W	W	0	7	0	0	18	0
Smith (R)	W	A	W	W	W	R	1	4	W	W	1	6	14	7	35	17
New Jersey																
Bradley (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	7	1	88	189	35	84
Lautenberg (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	7	1	88	133	15	90
New Mexico																
Bingaman (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	R	6	2	75	120	29	81
Domenici (R)	W	R	W	W	W	W	1	5	W	W	1	7	13	73	250	23
New York																
D'Amato (R)	W	W	R	R	R	W	3	3	W	W	3	5	38	94	95	50
Moynihan (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	7	1	88	240	24	91
North Carolina																
Faircloth (R)	W	A	W	W	W	W	0	5	W	W	0	7	0	1	17	6
Helms (R)	W	A	W	W	W	R	1	4	W	W	1	6	14	32	272	11
North Dakota																
Conrad (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	R	R	6	2	75	69	17	80
Dorgan (D)	R	R	R	W	R	R	5	1	W	R	6	2	75	13	4	76
Ohio																
Glenn (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	R	R	6	2	75	240	60	80
Metzenbaum (D)	R	R	R	A	R	R	5	0	R	R	7	0	100	258	17	94
Oklahoma																
Inhofe (R)	I	I	I	I	I	R	1	0	I	I	1	0	—	1	0	—
Boren (D)	R	R	W	W	W	I	2	3	W	R	3	4	43	96	130	42
Nickles (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	0	8	0	9	184	5
Oregon																
Hatfield (R)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	R	W	5	3	63	184	169	52
Packwood (R)	W	R	R	W	W	W	2	4	W	R	3	5	38	166	188	47
Pennsylvania																
Specter (R)	W	R	R	W	R	W	3	3	W	W	3	5	38	129	63	67
Wofford (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	W	R	6	2	75	35	5	88
Rhode Island																
Chafee (R)	W	R	W	W	W	W	1	5	W	R	2	6	25	116	151	43
Pell (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	R	R	6	2	75	362	39	90
South Carolina																
Hollings (D)	R	A	R	R	W	R	4	1	W	R	5	2	71	216	142	60
Thurmond (R)	W	W	W	W	W	R	1	5	W	W	1	7	13	54	384	12
South Dakota																
Daschle (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	W	R	5	3	63	69	16	81
Pressler (R)	W	W	W	R	W	W	1	5	W	W	1	7	13	61	154	28
Tennessee																
Mathews (D)	R	R	W	W	W	W	2	4	R	W	3	5	38	11	8	58
Sasser (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	W	W	4	4	50	210	53	80
Texas																
Gramm (R)	W	A	W	W	W	W	0	5	W	W	0	7	0	6	113	5
Hutchison (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	0	8	0	0	15	0
Utah																
Bennett (R)	W	A	W	W	W	W	0	5	W	W	0	7	0	0	18	0
Hatch (R)	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	6	W	W	0	8	0	34	229	13
Vermont																
Jeffords (R)	W	R	R	W	W	R	3	3	W	R	4	4	50	27	31	47
Leahy (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	8	0	100	260	47	85
Virginia																
Robb (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	W	R	5	3	63	44	18	71
Warner (R)	R	W	W	W	W	W	1	5	W	R	2	6	25	43	190	18
Washington																
Gorton (R)	W	R	W	W	W	W	1	5	W	W	1	7	13	12	49	20
Murray (D)	R	R	R	R	R	W	5	1	R	R	7	1	88	17	2	89
West Virginia																
Byrd (D)	R	W	R	W	R	R	4	2	R	R	6	2	75	329	107	75
Rockefeller (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	R	R	6	2	75	106	15	88
Wisconsin																
Feingold (D)	R	R	R	R	R	R	6	0	R	R	8	0	100	18	1	95
Kohl (D)	R	R	R	W	R	W	4	2	W	R	5	3	63	45	17	73
Wyoming																
Simpson (R)	W	A	W	R	W	W	1	4	W	W	1	6	14	18	209	8
Wallop (R)	W	A	W	W	W	W	0	5	W	W	0	7	0	24	235	9

Key:

R = Voted right or was paired right.

W = Voted wrong or was paired wrong.

A = Absent and not paired or voted "present."

I = Not in Congress at time.

UPIU puts company on spot, wins new accord

By James B. Parks

The Paperworkers rallied the Milwaukee community around the workers at Briggs & Stratton Corp., exposing the company's greed and gaining a new three-year contract that raises wages and provides severance for displaced workers.

The contract covers some 5,000 employees at three of the giant gas-engine manufacturer's plants and at a spin-off firm that will become the employer at an auto-locks manufacturing facility that the company had threatened to close.

The contract does not change the company's intention to move 2,000 jobs to low-wage, non-union plants in Kentucky, Missouri and Tennessee over the next three years, "but it will soften the sting for many workers facing displacement. It will also provide remaining workers with sizable pay and benefit gains," the union said.

"We faced a potential disaster with job losses and wanted to minimize the impact of the 2,000 jobs leaving," said Dick Crofter, president of UPIU Local 7232. "Through the severance package and the retirement package, we were able to address some of these issues."

The three-year package is markedly better than the pact rejected by the 5,000 UPIU members last Oct. 16. The new deal includes a severance package, an immediate $1-an-hour increase for skilled workers, higher annual wage hikes and jumps in shift premiums.

There are now three windows of opportunity for early retirement, two this year and one in 1997, that will make about 950 workers eligible for the benefit, about double the number eligible under the previous proposal.

The contract also provides severance pay ranging from $4,000 to $12,000, depending on length of service. Displaced workers also will be able to keep their pensions, plus be eligible for unemployment benefits.

Besides an immediate $1-per-hour wage increase, skilled workers will receive a 4 percent wage increase in August, 3 percent in 1996 and 2 percent in 1997. Production classifications will receive 3 percent in August and 2 percent in each of the two following years.

Pensions increase $1 per year of service in each year of the agreement and sick pay rises $40 over the life of the accord. Retiree life insurance also increases, as does active worker life insurance. Shift differentials climb 27 cents to 34 cents an hour for skilled workers and 7 cents to 14 cents for unskilled.

Two health care groupings were added, with the company agreeing to pay an additional $50 a month in health care costs in 1996 and another $18 in 1997.

The company moved its lock division in 1988 to Juarez, Mexico, where 525 workers now are employed. The situation was exacerbated in the fall of 1993 when the company threatened the local with the loss of another 240 lock jobs if it did not reopen negotiations early on the contract, which does not expire until August of this year.

The city of Milwaukee rallied around the workers, with both the mayor and the city's daily newspaper condemning Briggs & Stratton's actions. "Instead of sticking with the folks who helped bring its success so far, the company has chosen to cut and run," the Milwaukee Journal said in an editorial.

Mayor John Norquist said the company's decision to pull out was a "blow to the workers who built Briggs & Stratton."

Further disruptions came with the company's hardline move to reorganize operations at its engine division. With the threat of lost work, the union protested the company's violation of its contract. In retaliation, the company fired a bargaining committee member and two other workers for their protest against the violation of seniority rights.

A state administrative law judge subsequently ruled in favor of the fired workers by qualifying them to receive unemployment compensation. The National Labor Relations Board reinforced the finding by issuing an unfair labor practice complaint against the company.

UNION NEWS

PATCO members rehired

Thirteen years after President Reagan fired 11,400 striking air traffic controllers, the first 26 were rehired Jan. 10 and began training at the Federal Aviation Administration's Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center in Oklahoma City.

Many of the 26 have worked as controllers in other countries or in other areas of aviation since the strike. The controllers are mostly in their 40s.

At the urging of the AFL-CIO, President Clinton lifted a ban on rehiring the controllers shortly after he took office, touching off a rush of nearly 5,000 applications. About 4,500 were found eligible, according to the FAA. Those selected for re-employment must complete a special five-week refresher course.

Orange County coalition set

Employees represented by four AFL-CIO unions and a number of unaffiliated associations are banding together in an attempt to protect workers in the wake of the Orange County, Calif., bankruptcy crisis.

The organizations seek to ensure that county employees are not trampled in the chaotic actions taken by cities, school districts and others. The coalition includes AFSCME District Council 36, the Fire Fighters, the Service Employees, the Operating Engineers and unaffiliated associations representing law enforcement and other county employees.

The coalition has enlisted the representation of bankruptcy attorneys Pachulski, Stang, Ziehl and Young of Los Angeles.

Blood appeal issued

The American Red Cross is appealing to unionists and their families to donate blood during what is being described as the most critical blood shortage since World War II.

"What we have here is rivaled by something we saw many years ago," said David Oliver, Red Cross director of labor participation. He pointed out that donations suffered during the holidays because businesses were closed and people were busy. In addition, many patients put off elective surgery until the new year.

"High usage in the new year and low collections at the year's end makes for a shortage," said Oliver. "The United States uses 12-13 million pints of blood a year. If each union member donated once a year, there would be enough blood."



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Trade unionists and other activists march in front of the Washington offices of Chevron and Shell Oil calling for sanctions against Nigeria and the placement in escrow of its oil revenues. Oil accounts for about 95 percent of Nigeria's export earnings. Nigeria's military rulers have clamped down on trade union rights, arrested union leaders and annulled the recent presidential election. Last summer, Nigerian oil workers struck plants owned by Shell and Chevron to protest the junta's actions. The teachers' unions now are on strike, closing universities throughout the country.

FAST assails nursing home compliance

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

The court-ordered program designed by the nation's largest nursing home chain to correct flagrant health violations is "shockingly deficient," according to an AFL-CIO report.

The report, "System Breakdown," found that Beverly Enterprises' inability to improve patient care resulted in poor care for the residents in a majority of the 35 homes studied.

"The appalling pattern of violations that were found raises questions for residents and their family members about Beverly Enterprises' ability to provide even basic care; and for the taxpayers, who provide nearly 80 percent of its revenues, as to whether they're getting what they pay for," the report states.

Beverly, which receives almost 80 percent of its nearly $3 billion in annual revenue from taxpayer-supported programs like Medicaid and Medicare, operates 730 nursing homes across the country.

The study by the AFL-CIO Food and Allied Service Trades Department is based on Beverly's own reviews, as well as state inspection reports for the period of April 1991 to December 1993, when Beverly's standard "quality assurance" program was in effect.

The program, which covered more than 3,000 residents in 35 homes, was initiated as part of a settlement agreement between the company and the state of Missouri following criminal and civil investigations into egregious patient care problems in some Beverly homes. These problems included bed sore violations in 71.4 percent of the homes, chemical and physical restraint violations in 82.8 percent and incontinence violations in 68.5 percent.

"All of these problems are usually avoidable, and if not avoided, each has a direct negative effect on the health of nursing home residents," said FAST Secretary-Treasurer Jeff Fiedler. "If this is the best Beverly can do, even under a court-ordered settlement, residents in Beverly homes in 34 states are in constant danger."

According to the FAST report, several factors, including high employee turnover and insufficient staff, helped explain the failure to deliver quality care.

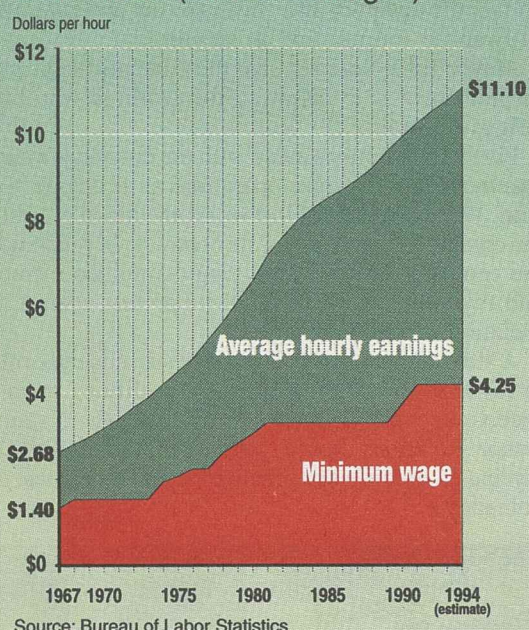
The problems in Missouri are not isolated. At the same time the Missouri settlement was in effect, three other states — California, Texas and Oregon — were investigating Beverly for failure to deliver basic quality care.

The Service Employees and the Food and Commercial Workers represent more than 7,200 workers at over 90 Beverly homes. The unions have filed four lawsuits against the company alleging numerous labor and safety violations.

DATA

Minimum wage versus average hourly earnings

1967 - 1994 (annual averages)



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

The minimum wage, at $4.25, continues to lag farther behind average hourly earnings, now at around $11.10. Legislation introduced by Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) would raise the wage floor by $1.50 over three years and examine ways to periodically adjust the minimum wage. The AFL-CIO has pointed out that increasing the minimum wage to 50 percent of average wages means about $5.56 an hour today.

Real Earnings	
December	+0.1 percent
From Dec. '93	+0.4 percent
From Dec. '79	-10.1 percent
Unemployment	
December	5.4 percent
From November '94	-0.2 percent
Consumer Price Index (CPI-W)	
December	+0.2 percent
Dec. '93-Dec. '94	+2.7 percent
Producer Price Index	
December	+0.2 percent

AFL-CIO NEWSGRAFIC

Raise wage floor, labor urges

Kennedy bill would boost minimum wage by $1.50

By David Kameras

The AFL-CIO welcomed the minimum wage increase proposed by Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) to "bring long overdue help to millions of workers in America."

Kennedy would raise the current $4.25 rate by 50-cent increments each year for the next three years, reaching $5.75 in 1997. His proposal also would create a commission to study whether to index the wage, so that it can be regularly adjusted for inflation — a remedy the AFL-CIO has long supported.

"It is unacceptable in this country today that a person who works full time, year round at the minimum wage...does not earn enough to bring a family of three above the poverty line," Kennedy said. "Despite the increases that went into effect in 1990 and 1991, the current minimum wage is still a poverty wage."

The AFL-CIO Executive Council urged a year ago that Congress adopt a three-step, $1.50 increase to bring the minimum to $5.75 an hour.

President Clinton, noting that the wage level is at a 20-year low, said he also would propose an increase in the minimum wage, pending an analysis by his economic advisers.

All proposals to raise the wage floor, however, will require a tough sell on Capitol Hill, where House Majority Leader Richard Armey (R-Texas) and Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee Chairman Nancy L. Kassebaum (R-Kan.) have declared their opposition to such a move.

Armey suggested eliminating the minimum wage altogether, an idea Commerce Secretary Ron Brown called "a throw-back to a century ago — where there is little or no concern for the plight of the American workers."

Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle added, "The fact is that the minimum wage is a floor in minimum decency."

A claim by House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) that raising the minimum wage will "especially hurt" African-American males prompted an angry response from a coalition of labor and community groups, including AFSCME, the Service Employees and its associate membership program, 9to5, which said "poverty, unemployment and racism especially hurt African-American males (and females)."

"Those who want to keep wages low should just say so and stop claiming to do so in the name of those they endanger," the coalition said.

The last minimum wage increase originally was coupled with a subminimum "training wage." However, the impact of the training wage on employment was "next to none," according to AFL-CIO economist John Zalusky, because only a tiny fraction of businesses used the training wage.

Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich told the House Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee that Republican allegations that raising the minimum wage would result in job losses are false.

A study released by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities concluded that a moderate increase in the minimum wage would not result in a significant loss of employment. It also found that "the purchasing power of the minimum wage is now at its second-lowest level in four decades."

This echoes the position of several leading economists, who maintain that raising the minimum wage has little or no impact on job growth.

Not raising the minimum wage, thus permitting wage inequality to continue to grow, will cause the United States to "pay a huge price in terms of stability and prosperity," Reich warned the committee.

"I don't think this is or should be a partisan issue," he said. "The whole purpose of the minimum wage over many, many decades has been to set a minimally decent floor."

Earlier, Vice President Gore said there is a "very strong argument" for raising the minimum wage, noting that Clinton "has said for a long time that he has supported measures to reflect reality in the minimum wage."

Almost invisible among the glowing news reports about the economic recovery is the fact that millions of Americans can't find jobs that pay enough to support their families.

The Jobs Now Coalition in Minnesota, for example, has found that the number of workers in that state not earning an adequate income is "three or four times the unemployment rate."

The AFL-CIO has called for boosting the minimum wage to 50 percent of the average nonsupervisory wage, with future increases indexed to inflation. At present, it hovers around 38 percent.

"That means that the minimum wage would be about $5.60 today," Zalusky said, "and three to four years out, more than $6 an hour would be appropriate." Canadian workers in several provinces have a minimum wage of $6-$7 an hour, he said.

Unemployment rate continues to fall

Unemployment in the United States declined in December from 5.6 to 5.4 percent as the overall jobs picture improved substantially over the year, from 6.7 percent unemployed last January.

The official numbers show 7.2 million persons out of work. But adding discouraged workers and those involuntarily working part time brings the number up to 13.4 million.

That's a lot of people out of work, said AFL-CIO economist Markley Roberts, who pointed to the societal costs of joblessness — people "without a sense of having a niche in society. It leaves them unable to afford college for their children and it lowers the opportunity for home ownership."

While 5.4 percent unemployment is the lowest rate in nearly five years, it falls well short of the 4 percent target mandated under federal law. That mandate has been ignored at the Federal Reserve Board, which has raised interest rates six times since February, pointing to the inflationary trend in the jobless figures.

By tying the inflation rate to the unemployment rate, economic policy makers are sacrificing full employment for an unproven theory, says Northwestern University economics professor Robert Eisner.

Eisner pointed to the early 1960s, when low unemployment and low inflation co-existed. "There is a major bugaboo in the economics profession that says there is a natural rate of unemployment, a concept I find abominable," he said.

"Our system is given to periods of inadequate demand," or purchasing power, Eisner said. "The question is why we can't influence the body politic to give us enough government spending, or enough cuts in taxes, and/or enough easy money to approach something like full employment."

Former Rep. Augustus Hawkins (D-Calif.), who with the late Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey (D-Minn.) wrote the full employment mandate, castigated the "job creation" provisions of the Republican's "Contract with America" as "just the opposite. It's a bill to promote regressive taxation."

Employers still are showing that they prefer to work their current employees harder rather than to hire new help. Overtime in manufacturing, which has been breaking records in recent months, hit a new record in December, with 4.8 hours per week per worker.

Unemployment was split evenly between adult men and women, both decreasing to 4.7 percent. Teenage unemployment increased from 15.8 percent to 17.2 percent.

The jobless rate was 9.8 percent for African Americans, 9.2 percent for Hispanics and 4.8 percent for whites. Among the 13 largest states, California had the bleakest picture at 7.4 percent, and North Carolina the best at 3.3 percent.

While manufacturing gained a strong 54,000 jobs for the month and 300,000 for the year, it is still 1.3 million below where it was five years ago.

Meanwhile, the Census Bureau has indicated that the job losses of the early 1990s contributed to lowering pay for those who found new jobs.

Over a 30-month period in 1990-92, typical income losses were between 20 and 23 percent for men and women holding full-time employment.

— David Kameras

Peso bailout puts burden on U.S., Mexican workers

The plan to bail Mexico out of its currency crisis with up to $40 billion in loan guarantees means that "working Americans — as taxpayers — are once again being asked to pay for the export of their own jobs and push down their own wages," the AFL-CIO said.

The loan guarantee "will be used to reinforce a direct appeal to American business to expand operations in Mexico rather than in the United States," the federation said of the proposal the administration sent to Congress.

The AFL-CIO noted that with the peso's collapse, the Mexican government is trying to reduce its current account deficit by significantly increasing Mexican exports and pricing imports, including those from the U.S., out of the reach of Mexican citizens. In the process, U.S. investment in Mexican factories will accelerate.

Mexican workers, who already have suffered 10 years of austerity, now can look forward to wage increases capped at 7 percent in the face of an estimated 19 percent inflation rate, while wealthy Mexicans have been moving their investments to other countries.

Some Democrats on Capitol Hill are trying to condition the bailout on strengthening labor standards beyond those contained in the severely flawed North American Free Trade Agreement.

Union as a family affair

AFT local pitches in to ensure baby's liver transplant

By Muriel H. Cooper

Unions are people helping people. Just ask AFT member Mark Pace and his wife Carolyn, who were at the brink of despair after learning that their health insurance would not cover a needed liver transplant for their new baby son, Drason.

But union co-workers, friends and community groups came to the rescue, raising the money so the Paces ''could concentrate on Drason's health and not the financial burden.''

Almost 300 teachers in Niles Township, Ill., contributed to the Pace medical fund. Within a couple of weeks, union members in the Council of District 219 raised $103,000 for the family.

''We just couldn't leave a member hanging out in the cold,'' said Council President Frank Mayfield. ''We stepped in to help. The key thing initially was that the hospital needed $100,000 'good faith' deposit. That gave us a target.''

Pace was teaching earth science and Carolyn was a science lab assistant when they met at Niles North High School. They married and she quit her job to start a family. Drason was born in September.

It was then the doctors discovered that Drason suffered from a rare condition known as OTC deficiency, which prevents the liver from producing an enzyme necessary to metabolize protein.

The nitrogen in the protein molecules turns into ammonia that poisons the blood and attacks and destroys the brain.

The baby spent 13 days in intensive care for his first treatment, which the insurance did cover. ''We weren't sure he was going to make it,'' said Pace. ''When we found out about the transplant it was a relief to learn we had an option, especially since Drason's deficiency had not caused brain damage so far.''

However, the school district's health insurance policy was written a decade ago and exempted liver transplants. At that time, such surgery was considered experimental.

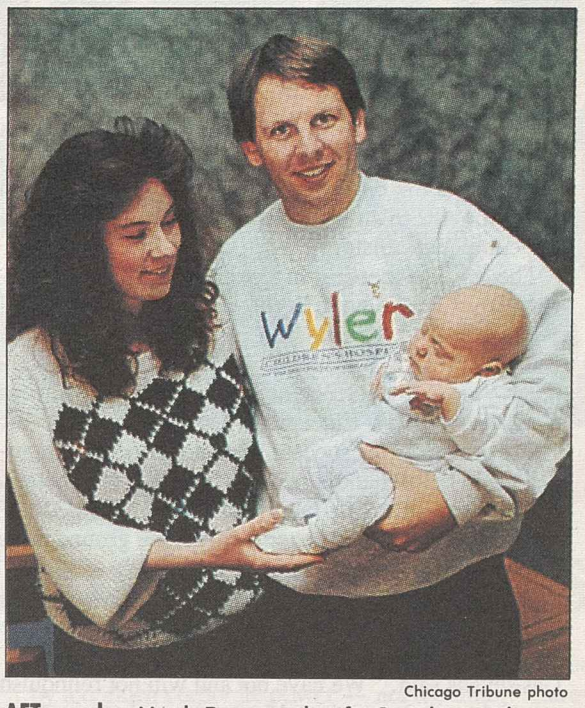
Testing showed that Pace was a good match for his son. A few days later, Wyler's Children Hospital in Chicago reversed its position on the 'good faith' money, but gave the overall cost of the surgery as between $250,000 and $300,000.

''There was an agreement that the immediate need for cash was not as acute, but the total need was even higher than originally expected,'' said Mayfield. ''There was agreement on 'full speed ahead' on our campaign to raise $100,000.

''This story just inspired people,'' said Mayfield. ''We keep looking for the next week totals. The people all pulled together. I am extremely proud of the union.''

''It was just overwhelming,'' said Pace. ''All we could do was focus on the situation right now. We couldn't look at the big picture. It was too overwhelming just worrying about Drason.

''People look at unions when they strike, but this is what unions are about. Unions are made to help people.''



Chicago Tribune photo

AFT member Mark Pace and wife Carolyn with son Drason after successful transplant.

Both father and son are recovering more quickly than doctors expected. Drason was able to celebrate Christmas at home.

The fund-raising effort will continue this year. Contributions can be made payable to the Barbara Ann DeBoer Foundation c/o American National Bank, Dept. 77-7958, Chicago, Ill. 60678-7958.

NEWSMAKERS

Four Fire Fighters killed in the line of duty in Seattle were memorialized as heroes by IAFF President **Alfred Whitehead** and **President Clinton. Lt. Walter Kilgore,** 45, **Lt. Greg Shoemaker,** 43, **Randall Terlicker,** 32, and **James Brown,** 25, made ''the ultimate sacrifice one can make as a fire fighter,'' Whitehead said during a Jan. 11 memorial service. He also read a message from Clinton hailing the fire fighters. The four died in a fire set by an arsonist, and the union is offering a $25,000 reward for the arrest and conviction of those responsible. ''Someone out there has knowledge about this tragic fire and this reward may motivate them to come forward,'' Whitehead said.

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions Executive Board appointed **Bill Jordan** as acting general secretary. He will succeed **Enzo Friso,** who retired. Jordan, president of the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union, is the first Briton to lead the world trade union federation.

Elizabeth M. Smith has been named political director of the AFT. She will replace **Rachelle Horowitz,** who is retiring. Smith is the former political director for the Clothing and Textile Workers and most recently has been a legislative director for Xerox, whose contract with ACTWU is one of the national models of productive employee involvement. A New York political activist, Horowitz was transportation coordinator of the 1963 March on Washington and administrative director of the A. Philip Randolph Institute before joining the AFT staff in Washington.

The National Mediation Board will officially lose member **Patrick J. Cleary** Feb. 1, when he returns to work with his former consulting firm. Meanwhile, President Clinton resubmitted to Congress the name of Honolulu labor lawyer **Kenneth Hipp** as a replacement.

Former AFL-CIO staff member **Joe Velasquez** has left his White House post of deputy director for political affairs to join Fingerhut, Powers, Smith & Associates Inc., a Washington communications and consulting firm. Velasquez was director of the AFL-CIO Department of Community Services and assistant director of COPE before joining the Clinton administration in 1993.

George W. Taylor, considered the ''father of American arbitration,'' has become the 18th person inducted into the Labor Hall of Fame. He was credited with settling more than 2,000 labor-management disputes. Taylor played a major role in the 1930s in developing the National Labor Relations Act, which gave unions the right to organize.

CORRECTIONS

The Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees and the Electronic Workers will meet for conventions in 1996, not this year as listed Jan. 9 in the Convention Calendar. The Indiana AFL-CIO does meet in 1995, in Indianapolis Oct. 31-Nov. 3.

— Compiled by Muriel H. Cooper

Merrill Lynch hogs anti-worker award

Merrill Lynch has been dubbed the ''Hog of the Month'' by the Campaign for an America that Works, a coalition of labor, environmental and community groups formed to counter the corporate bent of the Republicans' congressional agenda.

Teamsters President Ron Carey, presenting the ''achievement'' award to the giant investment house, pointed out that Merrill Lynch played a role in the bankruptcy of Orange County, Calif., and is the principal investor in Borg-Warner Securities Inc., the union-busting owner of Pony Express Courier Corp.

''Merrill Lynch had profits of more than $1 billion in 1993, . . . but they don't want to share any of that with me and my family and the community where I live,'' said Bill Rak, a Pony Express worker from Pittsburgh who lost his job after he and fellow workers voted to form a union.

Merrill Lynch also made a king-sized soft-money campaign contribution to support 1994 Republican candidates. Borg-Warner, meanwhile, has received $47 million in tax subsidies to hire workers it would have hired anyway at its Pony Express subsidiary. Pony Express, which pays about $5.25 an hour with no benefits, has been charged by the National Labor Relations Board with 125 separate unfair labor practice complaints.

The government rewarded management with a targeted tax credit, and now the GOP wants to give them more, Rak said. ''The politicians keep telling me that the problem is welfare mothers or immigrants coming across the border. Poor folks aren't the ones destroying this country. It's these major corporations.'' he added.

''Merrill Lynch likes to say it is 'bullish' on America,'' Carey said. ''The truth is, Merrill Lynch is piggish on America. It's the kind of company that cares more about feeding its own greed than about the needs of American families and communities.''

The campaign will be buying radio time throughout the country in the coming weeks to broadcast ''Hogs at the Trough,'' a 30-second spot aimed at exposing the new tax breaks and subsidies that corporate lobbyists are presently seeking from Congress.

— David Kameras

RESOURCES

PUBLICATIONS

Lost Your Job Since NAFTA? A Worker's Guide to the NAFTA Transitional Adjustment Assistance Program is a pamphlet by the AFL-CIO Human Resources Development Institute. For copies, contact HRDI at 815 16th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

The State of Working America 1994-95, a book by Lawrence Mishel and Jared Bernstein of the Economic Policy Institute, reveals growing income and wealth disparities, more work for lower wages, more underemployment and continuing poverty. The book costs $24.95 for paper and $55 for cloth. To order, call M.E. Sharpe Inc. at 800/541-6563.

CONFERENCES

The **Fifth Annual Construction Safety Conference,** cosponsored by the Chicago Building Trades and Operating Engineers Local 150, will be held Feb. 21-23 at the Holiday Inn O'Hare in Rosemont, Ill. For more information and registration, contact the Construction Safety Council, 4415 West Harrison St., Suite 403, Hillside, Ill. 60162; 800/552-7744.

The **1995 Midwest School for Women Workers,** sponsored by the AFL-CIO and the University and College Labor Educators Association, will be held July 30-Aug. 4 at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. For more information and registration call 608/262-2111.

The OSHA Training Institute Center will conduct a class on occupational safety and health standards for the construction industry in Baltimore Feb. 6-10, and on voluntary compliance in construction in Morgantown, W.Va., March 6-10. For more information, call 800/FOR-NRC4 or 202/628-3293 in the Washington area.

VIDEOS

The Service Employees have a wide array of videos available to local unions planning Black History Month observances in February. Some of the videos include ''Eyes on the Prize,'' ''Miles of Smiles, Years of Struggle'' and ''In Remembrance of Martin.'' For information, call the SEIU Education Department at 202/898-3436.

The Center to Protect Workers' Rights has produced a five-minute video, **Preventing Musculoskeletal Disorders,** which reviews the job factors in construction that can result in sprains and other musculoskeletal disorders — and what can be done to prevent them. The video costs $7. The video is available from CPWR Publications, 111 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001.

Caterpillar bargaining resumes

By James B. Parks

Top officials of the UAW and Caterpillar Inc. returned to the bargaining table for the first time in seven months in an effort to end the longest strike in the company's history.

The Jan. 20 meeting in Louisville, Ky., was convened by John Calhoun Wells, director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service and included UAW Secretary-Treasurer Bill Casstevens and Caterpillar Vice President Wayne Zimmerman. Casstevens heads the union's Caterpillar department.

But prospects for success were not good. The company said beforehand it would not discuss the union's top concern of unfair labor practices and the UAW rejected the company's attempt to set the ground rules for talks.

''We have repeatedly stated that the union cannot dictate the issues raised by the company, nor can the company dictate the issues raised by the union,'' Casstevens said. ''We have not and will not relinquish our right to bring to the table any issue that separates us.''

''We're into a union bust like none of us has ever seen before,'' said Jerry Brown, president of UAW Local 974. ''They still want to play the hard line.''

Some 14,000 UAW members walked out June 21 over unfair labor practices. The strike affects eight plants in Illinois, Pennsylvania and Colorado, and has surpassed the old record at Caterpillar, a 205-day strike in 1982 and 1983.

The last contract expired in September 1991. The UAW ended a 163-day strike in 1992 and began an in-house campaign to win a better contract.

Although the company denies it, the strike has been costly for Caterpillar. In ''The UAW and Caterpillar, 1994: The Year in Review,'' the union noted that production of Caterpillar vehicles has dropped significantly at final assembly plants affected by the strike. Average unit production during the six months from August 1994 to January 1995 was 7.5 vehicles per day, compared to 17.2 in the same period last year, a drop of 56 percent.

Stark's Off-Highway Ledger, a respected industry newsletter, reports that monthly production is decreasing each month of the strike, the UAW said. The company will produce 1,065 fewer vehicles in the past six months than in the same period last year, the newsletter said.

The union thus far has filed more than 120 unfair labor practice charges with the National Labor Relations Board. An administrative law judge in November ruled in favor of the UAW in four of the cases. That decision has given rise to a ''strong momentum'' within the union for renewed talks with the company, said UAW spokesman Roger Kerson.

The company claims the strike is over economic issues. The distinction is important because under federal law, Caterpillar scabs cannot become permanent employees in an unfair labor practice strike, but can if the strike is over economic issues.

In a related matter, an administrative law judge found that Caterpillar violated federal labor laws when it ignored seniority rules and gave preferential treatment in job assignments to employees who crossed picket lines during the 1992 strike.

The ruling ''means that our guys will be treated fairly when they return — hopefully soon — from this strike and not get stuck on third shift just because they exercise their legal right to strike,'' Kerson said.

Judge James L. Rose ruled Jan. 5 that officials at Caterpillar's East Peoria, Ill., plant gave illegal preferential treatment to some workers who had crossed the picket line when it exempted them from job changes created by a plant modernization.

Strike costs Bridgestone $80 million

Continued from Page 1

''We talked about things I've been doing behind the scenes to promote collective bargaining,'' Reich said. The group did some ''brainstorming'' to find solutions, he said, noting that avenues already being pursued include working with federal mediators and with foreign ambassadors.

Four Democratic senators — Paul Simon and Carol Moseley Braun, both of Illinois, John Glenn of Ohio and Tom Harkin of Iowa, wrote the CEO of Bridgestone/Firestone's Japanese parent to ask him to rescind the decision to hire permanent replacements. When nothing happened, they wrote another letter, which was handed to Japanese Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama, warning that the decision to use permanent replacements ''threatens to harm U.S.-Japanese relations.''

Arguing that the use of permanent replacements is illegal in Japan, Simon and Harkin introduced an unsuccessful sense of the Senate resolution that called on the company to reconsider its decision. The resolution was tabled on a 56-23 vote.

Meanwhile, a Bridgestone/Firestone spokesman admitted that the strike has cost the company about $80 million. There are about 5,000 URW members on strike nationwide at Bridgestone/Firestone and Pirelli Armstrong in what has become the longest strike on record for the union, surpassing a 141-day strike in 1976.

Throughout the strike, the company has refused to reopen bargaining, claiming that the union had its ''last, best and final offer.''

The URW is prepared to stay the course and continue the strike as long as necessary, union spokesman Curtis Brown said. The URW will hold a special convention Jan. 25 to increase its strike fund, he said.

BARGAINING

UAW strikes GM plant

Members of the UAW struck a crucial General Motors Corp. parts plant in Flint, Mich., that supplies all of the Big Three U.S. automakers, threatening production at assembly plants.

Negotiators worked through the night to try to avert the Jan. 18 strike over staff levels at GM's AC Delco East complex, where 6,800 hourly workers produce spark plugs, air cleaners, air meters, filters, cruise controls, fuel pumps and instrument clusters.

As supplies run out, a long strike could force the shutdown of some GM assembly plants. The UAW had requested that GM hire up to 500 additional workers and reduce overtime schedules. The same staffing issue prompted a strike in October at the huge Buick City complex in Flint.

IBT opens carhaul talks

The Teamsters plan to push for pension reform, job security and better health benefits when formal negotiations begin with the nation's carhaulers later this month.

The IBT negotiating proposal, presented to the companies Jan. 5 by President Ron Carey, was developed through an extensive membership survey. Formal negotiations begin Jan. 30.

Most of the nation's carhaulers are covered by the IBT's national master automobile transporters agreement. It covers some 15,000 workers who deliver many of the new automobiles from factories to dealerships. Over the past two years, carhaulers posted the best earnings since the mid-1980s, the union said.

''These are good jobs with good wages and benefits. Like other workers, Teamster carhaul members deserve secure jobs and a chance to look forward to a decent retirement,'' said Ron Owens, the union's national carhaul director.

Solidarity boosts HERE

Union and community solidarity helped save the job security and seniority of some 600 union members at the Los Angeles Hilton and Towers.

The building's Korean owner Hanjin International Corp. had threatened to eliminate some of the workers' jobs and seniority when the Hilton did not renew its contract to manage the hotel. That spurred several unions and community organizations to say they would cancel future events at the hotel. Delegates to the AFL-CIO Safety and Health Conference also demonstrated in support of the hotel workers.

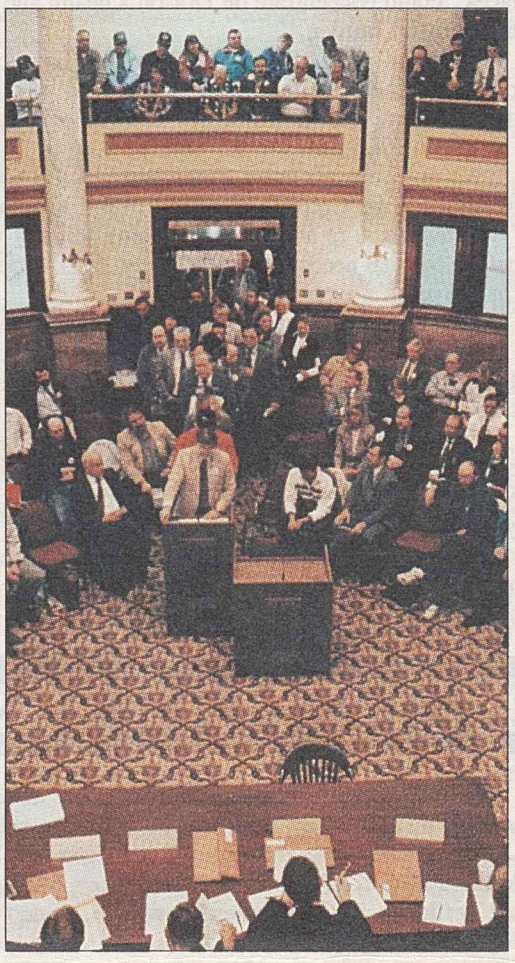
The workers are represented by Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Local 11, Service Employees Local 399, Operating Engineers Local 501, Painters Local 2, Teamsters Local 986 and the unaffiliated Laundry and Drycleaning Local 52.

The company agreed to accept the contract negotiated with HERE Local 11. Negotiations continue over other issues with the other unions.

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INSIDE



Montana AFL-CIO Executive Secretary Don Judge testifies against so-called "right-to-work" legislation as hundreds of trade unionists listen from the gallery in Helena. The committee tabled the proposal, but labor was braced for other anti-union initiatives in Montana and several other states where Republicans have gained control of the legislatures and statehouses.

See story Page 2

UNION YES

1/23/95

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AFL-CIO NEWS

VOLUME 40, NUMBER 3 FEBRUARY 6, 1995



Earl Dotter/Carpenters

Unions look to future and environmental cleanup. **See FOCUS, Page 7.**

Sham union bill assaults worker rights

By James B. Parks

A Republican measure to ease the rules on company-dominated employee committees is ''the most one-sided and the most serious labor law assault on worker rights in 35 years,'' the AFL-CIO said.

Labor vowed to vigorously oppose the bill, described as a blatant attempt to restore company unions, returning to the bad old days when employers created sham unions to deny workers their rights to organizations of their own.

''It takes away the right of workers to an independent representative in dealing with subjects where workers and employers have different interests,'' said David M. Silberman, director of the AFL-CIO task force on labor law. Nothing in the legislation would prevent employers from setting up labor committees, writing the by-laws, picking the employee representatives and dealing directly with groups of employees on wages and working conditions, he said.

The legislation is undemocratic and un-American, Teamsters President Ron Carey said. ''All Americans should have the right to choose their own representatives. No one would call it democracy if people from another country chose America's leaders. In the same way, it is undemocratic to let management choose employee representatives, dictate what issues they can discuss and disband a committee if it takes the wrong positions.''

''The crisis for the American middle class is caused by too much corporate power — not too little,'' Carey said in a statement. ''The economic crisis will be solved by giving workers more of a voice in the workplace, not by taking away our democratic rights.''

The so-called ''Teamwork for Employees and Managers Act of 1995'' was introduced by Rep. Steve Gunderson (R-Wis.) and Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee Chairwoman Nancy L. Kassebaum (R-Kan.).

It would lift the 60-year-old ban on certain types of company-sponsored employee committees by

Continued on Page 3

Social Security left unprotected to budget cuts

By Mike Hall

The Republican-controlled Congress passed two budget-cutting, anti-regulation measures that could hurt millions of Americans far into the future.

The House on Jan. 26 approved a constitutional amendment to balance the budget that leaves Social Security vulnerable to budget cuts and leaves open which spending reductions will be needed to bring the federal budget into balance.

The following day, the Senate passed a bill to ban all so-called unfunded federal mandates. Passage came after Senate Republicans rejected an amendment that would have protected current labor standards like minimum wage, workplace health and safety protections, the Family and Medical Leave Act and the Fair Labor Standards Act. The House passed the bill Feb. 1 by a 360-74 margin.

On the balanced budget amendment, Republican leaders in both the Senate and the House refused to provide details on how they would balance the federal budget by the resolution's deadline of the year 2002. Some estimates say more than $1.6 trillion in spending cuts would be required to balance the federal budget. The bill is expected to come up for a vote in the Senate in two or three weeks.

The Republican majority in the House also defeated an amendment that would have protected Social Security and another to require spelling out the spending cut details. The House did approve a non-binding resolution to protect the Social Security Trust Fund from raids to balance the budget. But the resolution ''has all the force of a campaign promise,'' said Rep. Robert E. Wise Jr. (D-W.Va.).

''You don't come clean with the American people, because you don't want them to know the truth,'' House Minority Whip David E. Bonior (D-Mich.) told Republicans. ''The truth is you are going to slash Social Security. You are going to slash Medicare. You are going to slash veterans benefits. You are going to pick the pockets of our seniors.''

President Clinton agreed, saying the American people ''are entitled to know, does this mean taxes are going up? Does this mean that they're going to cut Medicare and Social Security across the board? What is the price of this?''

Along with Social Security benefits, Medicare and Medicaid also are likely targets for cuts. The Republicans have said all spending except for defense

Continued on Page 3



David Bacon

Diamond Walnut strikers celebrate a decision by the National Labor Relations Board throwing out the results of a union decertification election at the company where more than 500 Teamsters have been out since September 1991. The strikers, mostly older Hispanic women, were permanently replaced by younger, mostly male workers trained by the strikers.

World labor boosts Staley workers

OSHA fines company $706,000 for safety violations

By James B. Parks

In a show of international and community solidarity, Paperworkers locked out for nearly two years by A.E. Staley Manufacturing of Decatur, Ill., joined hands with religious and international labor leaders, pleading their case before stockholders of the corporate parent in London.

The workers received the news on Jan. 27 that the Occupational Safety and Health Administration cited Staley for 212 health and safety violations, including 173 that were "serious" or "willful," and fined the company $706,000 for its "overall lax attitide toward safety issues."

The decision and fine by OSHA Law Judge James H. Barkley ''highlight Staley's complete disregard for its employees' rights and dignity,'' said David Watts, president of UPIU Local 7837. ''Staley's health and safety practices are no better than its labor relations practices.''

The three-month inspections leading to the fines began in July 1990 and uncovered numerous explosion hazards caused by accumulations of combustible dust. Instances of improperly labeled asbestos hazards or asbestos debris that had not been cleaned up also were cited. Staley has 20 days to appeal the ruling.

In London, Allan Ferris, Local 7837 bargaining chairman, warned stockholders of Tate & Lyle PLC, Staley's parent company, not to be fooled by claims that the company had an excellent safety record before the lockout. He also disputed company claims of safety records set after the lockout, citing a company memorandum warning scabs that they could be fired for any workplace accident.

The issue is one of simple justice, a Catholic priest from Decatur told the stockholders. The 20-month lockout must end so that workers and management can ''concentrate on resolving the essential issues that will lead to a collective agreement, and bring hope

Continued on Page 8

'Neglected public sector starving private sector'

Without further investment in infrastructure, America's ability to compete internationally will collapse, along with its bridges and roads.

That was the clear message delivered at a conference in Washington that brought together labor, business and government policy-makers to discuss the need of promoting ways to restore the nation's economic strength after years of neglect.

"To neglect the public infrastructure is to starve the private sector," warned AFSCME President Gerald McEntee. "Business needs an efficient transportation system and a skilled work force."

"We must return to the investment agenda and give our workers the skills and the tools and the infrastructure that is necessary to compete . . . on an international basis," he said.

Some 234,500 miles of U.S. roads are rated poor or mediocre, and one out of three bridges is rated structurally deficient or functionally obsolete, according to the Rebuild America Coalition. Transit facilities and vehicles are aging and in poor condition, airports can't keep up with growing air traffic and more than 10,000 dams are classified as high hazard.

The Transportation Department has indicated that simply making modest improvements to roads and bridges, giving them eight to 12 additional years of life, would cost nearly $1.4 trillion. Further, the Environmental Protection Agency reports that $137 billion would have been needed in 1992 for treatment plants, sewers and other projects in order to comply with current requirements.

Cost is not the only issue, however. Robert A. Georgine, president of the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department, warned of a declining availability of skilled construction workers.

"While many factors are contributing to this serious phenomenon, none is greater than the depression of wages in the industry," he said. "A construction worker's real wages haven't increased for 20 years. And when incomes fall that low, few men or women want to enter that occupation."

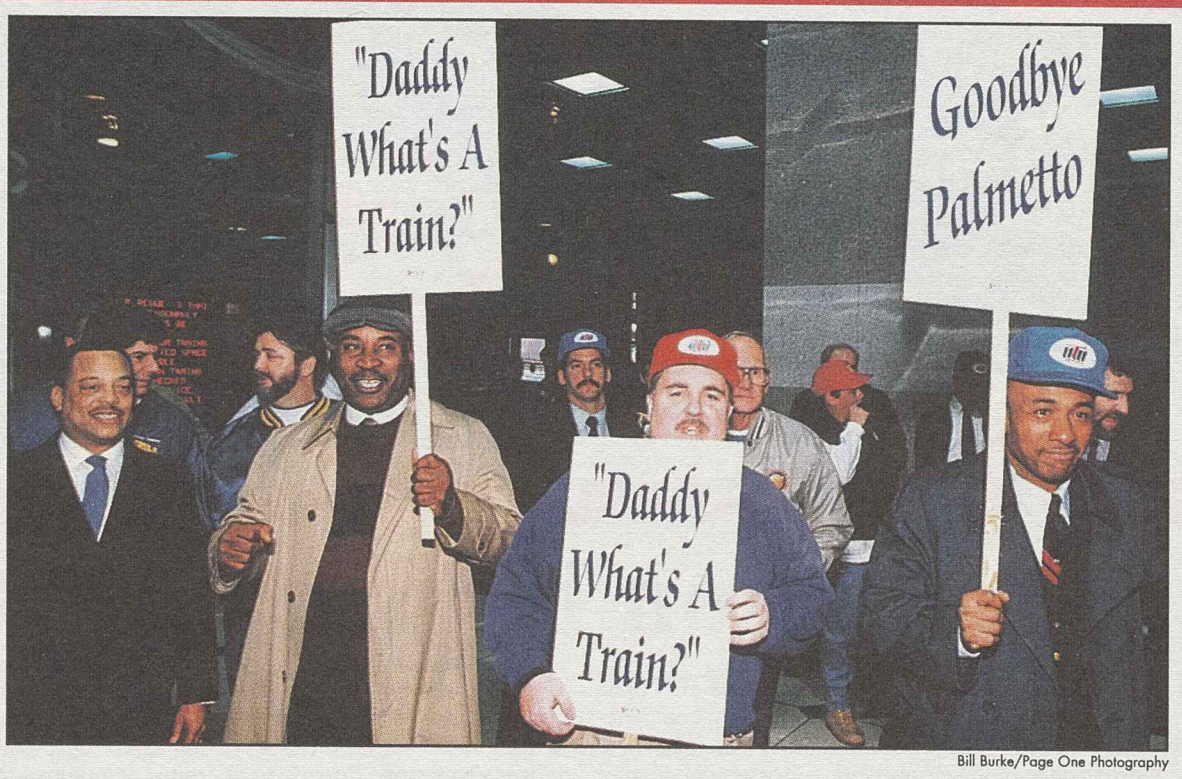
Georgine took note of the attacks on the Davis-Bacon Act currently taking place on Capitol Hill. "I can't let anyone forget that in this struggle we are undertaking today, the workers are just as critical as are the funds and the projects."

With the recent major earthquake in Japan on everyone's mind, Andrew Warren, chairman of the coalition, said, "We in America are experiencing a silent earthquake of our own. . . . The rumblings are unheard, but the results will be every bit as catastrophic as what's happened in Japan."

Warren warned that with leaking pipes, unbuilt roads and bridges that are deemed structurally unsound, the economy of the country is at stake. "Our house is on fire . . . and so many of us are standing around while the house is burning down, contemplating what color to paint the shutters."

Lawrence Klein, a Nobel laureate from the University of Pennsylvania, added that many economists "have taken up the argument that good infrastructure makes the whole economy more productive and more efficient."

— David Kameras



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Transportation Communications Union members, witnessing the last arrival of the New York-to-Tampa Palmetto, rally at Washington's Union Station to protest efforts in Congress to gut funding for Amtrak.

ICC may lose ticket to ride

Moves to scrap agency put rail labor at risk

By David Kameras

Congress is preparing to railroad a move to eliminate a long-standing federal agency tasked with protecting rail workers.

But members of the House Transportation and Infrastructure subcommittee on railroads were admonished to "remember the interest of the employees" in their rush to get rid of the Interstate Commerce Commission.

Former New Jersey Governor James Florio, chairman of the Safe Transit and Rail Transportation coalition, noted that while railroads have one-fourth the number of workers they did in the mid-1950s, largely as a result of mergers, they now carry more freight at greater profits than at any time since the last century.

"The major savings were realized at the expense of the workers," he said. "Early on, the commission saw the justice of requiring the railroads to share temporarily some of their permanent savings in those mergers with those who provided them — the railroad employees."

Since 1936, Florio said, the ICC has exercised authority to protect employee interests. That authority was confirmed by the Supreme Court and reaffirmed by Congress in 1976 and again in 1980.

"The skills of a great many railroad occupations are not easily learned, nor are they readily saleable in other industries," said Florio, who was accompanied by Edward Wytkind, executive director of the AFL-CIO Transportation Trades Department. "Because of the reduction of jobs in the industry, most of the remaining employees, because of their age, will find re-employment difficult if not impossible."

Florio maintained that should the ICC be scrapped, its authority to protect rail workers should reside with the secretary of labor.

The chairman of the full committee, Bud Shuster (R-Pa.), is on record favoring elimination of the agency, as is President Clinton, who mentioned it in his State of the Union address as a budget-cutting target.

In other developments among transportation unions:

- Transportation Communications Union President Robert A. Scardelletti has asked the Michigan congressional delegation for help in stopping the ICC from granting a request by the Canadian National Railway to move 800 jobs to Canada, while preventing U.S. workers from following their jobs. CN currently is offering its locomotive engineers stateside jobs, with assistance in arranging their entry into the United States.
- The four unions at USAir —the Air Line Pilots, Machinists, Transport Workers and Flight Attendants — continue to bargain concessions to restore health to the beleaguered air carrier, which reported record losses during the fourth quarter of 1994. The allocation of concessions remains the biggest sticking point.
- With TWU scheduled to begin contract talks Feb. 7 with American Airlines, union Vice President Edward Koziatek expressed the hope that both sides will "make every effort to address mutual problems."
- Delta Air Lines is contesting a ruling by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission finding that the carrier's past weigh-in policy discriminated against female flight attendants.
- In the wake of the failure in December by workers to vote for union representation, America West Airlines has announced that it will terminate 1,100 jobs, 10 percent of its work force.
- The Masters, Mates and Pilots, an affiliate of the Longshoremen, have reached a contract agreement with Sea-Land Service, the nation's largest U.S.-flag liner ship operator, to provide job opportunities to licensed deck officers on vessels the carrier registers abroad.
- Citing fatigue as a major factor in truck accidents, the National Transportation Safety Board has called for the first major revision since 1937 of rules governing hours of driving, including the use of sleeper berths to break up driving periods.

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Director of Information: Rex Hardesty

Editor: Michael Byrne

Assistant Editors: Candice Johnson, David Kameras, James B. Parks

Staff Writers: Muriel H. Cooper, Mike Hall, Colleen M. O'Neill, Sharolyn A. Rosier

Graphics/layout: Stan Hitt

AFL-CIO Headquarters: 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006
Telephone: (202) 637-5010
CompuServe: 76004,3601

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LEGISLATION

GOP mounts serious assault on labor law

Continued from Page 1

amending Section 8(a)(2) of the National Labor Relations Act. Under the proposed change, it would not be considered an unfair labor practice for employers to establish or assist worker-management teams that discuss quality control and productivity.

Section 8(a)(2) of the NLRA makes it unlawful for any employer "to dominate or interfere with the formation or administration of any labor organization or contribute financial or other support to it."

Management groups have been actively trying to eliminate the law for some time. They seized an opportunity after a December 1992 National Labor Relations Board ruling that Electromation Inc. formed an illegal worker group as a way to thwart an IBT organizing drive.

The AFL-CIO has argued the case settled nothing because the company violation was so blatant — forming worker committees in the middle of the workers' campaign for real union representation. If employers were really interested in empowering workers for more workplace cooperation, they could easily do so without violating the law.

Silberman said numerous studies have found that participation programs now are used at 50 percent to 75 percent of the nation's workplaces.

The unanimous Electromation decision, handed down by Bush administration appointees, was based on the obvious attempt by the company "not to enable management and employees to cooperate . . . but to create in employees the impression that their disagreement with management had been solved" and there was no need for a union, the NLRB said.

The AFL-CIO, responding to the Electromation ruling, said, "Only companies that are committed to an honest and equal partnership between management and labor can create and sustain the kind of employee participation that is essential if this country is to meet the competitive challenge of a world economy.

"Companies that are committed to managing from the top down and dominating their employees cannot do so. That is true whether a company is open about its management style or disguises it through the pretense of employer-run participation committees," the federation said.

The employee teams would not be allowed to claim authority to negotiate collective bargaining agreements with employers in the place of unions, the bill's authors said.

But that restriction is not enough, Silberman said. The bill is especially dangerous for workers because it takes away the fundamental right of workers to be represented by their own, independent representatives.

The AFL-CIO has long supported true cooperation between labor and management. But this bill goes beyond issues of teamwork, Silberman said. It would allow management to create, mold and terminate employee organizations and employee representation plans at will.

Thus, not only could sham unions be formed in U.S. workplaces that are experimenting with cooperative structures, but they could be used everywhere to block worker attempts for a real voice through a collective bargaining agreement.

Saying that the committees cannot bargain does not prevent an employer from bypassing an existing union to deal with hand-picked representatives on working conditions, Silberman noted. And that, the AFL-CIO has made clear, "puts the employer on both sides of the table."

The bill also would further tilt the balance in labor relations toward employers by eviscerating a long-standing employee protection while not putting any compensating employee protection in place, he said.

The Commission on the Future of Worker-Management Relations, known as the Dunlop Commission, emphasized that maintaining the balance in labor law was essential.

The commission's report cautioned that any increase in flexibility to use employee participation should be accompanied by increased access by workers to real unions. The Kassebaum-Gunderson bill ignores that idea, Silberman added.

Kassebaum and Gunderson introduced identical bills in the 103rd Congress, but they never made it out of committee. Kassebaum's bill was co-sponsored by Republican Sens. James Jeffords (Vt.), Judd Gregg (N.H.) and Slade Gorton (Wash.), all members of the Labor Committee.

Capitol agenda turns back the clock

Budget, mandate measures put Americans at risk

Continued from Page 1

appropriation would be subject to cuts.

That policy runs counter to public sentiment. Support for excluding Social Security from a balanced budget amendment is overwhelming, according to a survey by Garin-Hart Strategic Research Group. Eighty percent of those surveyed, young and old alike, said Social Security should be excluded from a balanced budget amendment. The sentiment was even more pronounced among Republican voters (82 percent to 78 percent for Democrats).

In addition, the vast majority of Americans believe that both Social Security and Medicare should not be subject to the budget ax. Sixty-three percent of the voters think Social Security should never be cut, and another 18 percent believe it should be the last program to suffer cutbacks.

Forty-seven percent of the voters said Medicare should never be cut, while an additional 22 percent placed it on the bottom of programs to be cut.

During Senate debate, an amendment will be offered to protect Social Security, but the Republican majority is expected to defeat it. The final vote on the amendment is not certain. Both sides agree that the issue could come down to a single vote. A two-thirds majority is needed to send the measure to the states for ratification.

A balanced budget amendment also would drastically reduce the amount of federal aid to states and cities for programs ranging from law enforcement to highways to school lunches to clean air and water.

A study by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities estimated state and local governments could lose some $100 billion annually in federal aid under the terms of the Republican plans. While the GOP promises not to raise federal taxes, a family of four in the 10 hardest hit states would see their state and local tax bill jump more than $2,100 to maintain services now covered by the federal aid, the study showed.

Meanwhile, the business-backed drive to eliminate or weaken vital workplace safety and health protections, wage and hour safeguards and even child labor laws got a big boost when both houses passed legislation to ban so-called unfunded mandates. Several amendments to soften the impact on workers and their families were defeated.

Before the Senate passed the bill (S. 1), it defeated an amendment by Sen. Joseph I. Lieberman (D-Conn.) to exclude laws that apply equally to the public and private sectors. In effect, it would have protected current labor standards such as minimum wage, workplace health and safety protections, the Family and Medical Leave Act and the Fair Labor Standards Act, among others. The amendment was tabled by 53-44.

In the House, Reps. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) and William Clay (D-Mo.) introduced an amendment to H.R. 5 to exempt from the ban such labor standards as child labor and minimum wage laws. The AFL-CIO supported the amendment, but it failed Jan. 25 by 161-263.

In both cases, no Republicans voted to protect these vital safety, health, wage and workplace safeguards. "Congress does not enact labor statutes in order to impose costs upon employers," Clay said. "The Congress enacts labor statutes because the need to protect the American worker is of great national interest."

Amendments to exempt federal safeguards concerning air pollution, nuclear safety, aviation safety and security and health safeguards for children, pregnant women and the elderly all were defeated by substantial GOP majorities.

GOP 'Contract with America' follows the money

A large coalition of business groups, conservative organizations and lobbying firms appears to have thrown its financial weight behind the Republican "Contract with America."

The coalition strongly supported the balanced budget amendment and the unfunded mandate legislation, both of which were opposed by the AFL-CIO and a wide range of consumer, civil rights, environmental and other groups.

Working closely with Republican leaders, the so-called "Project Relief" includes such traditional anti-union groups as the National Association of Manufacturers, the National Federation of Independent Business, the Chamber of Commerce and others.

According to the Congressional Quarterly, the 20-member steering committee of Project Relief spent more than $7.2 million in 1994 federal lobbying expenses, PAC contributions and soft money donations to elect the Republican Congress.

Most of these groups have long opposed strong workplace safety standards, wage protections, collective bargaining laws, the Family and Medical Leave Act, strong environmental laws and many other federal standards that congressional Republicans have put on their hit list.

Congress frees workers on its Hill plantation

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

A new law signed Jan. 23 by President Clinton gives some 38,000 congressional employees protection under federal employment and labor laws.

The Congressional Accountability Act requires Congress to comply with 11 major employment, civil rights, health and safety laws, including the law allowing workers to form unions and bargain collectively.

"Wherever public employees have the legal right to form unions, they do so in large numbers, and I would expect the same thing would happen with employees in Congress," said Al Bilik, president of the AFL-CIO Public Employee Department.

The opportunity for collective bargaining will be available to help Congress reinvent itself, said Government Employees President John Sturdivant. "We will reach out to any federal worker who needs the benefit that unions bring."

The employment laws will apply to Congress in one year, with the exception of the Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Act of 1978, which takes effect in October 1996. That law permits collective bargaining but prohibits strikes.

Still, as AFSCME President Gerald W. McEntee pointed out, some 15 million state and local public employees are excluded from national collective bargaining laws and must depend on states to pass bargaining laws. Only 23 states have enacted comprehensive public-sector bargaining laws, and 14 states have no public-sector bargaining laws at all.

"We are appealing to the states to follow the lead of the Congress and enact laws to protect all public employees," McEntee said.

The legislation received overwhelming support in both houses of Congress with votes of 390 to 0 in the House and 95 to 1 in the Senate.

The new law establishes a five-member Office of Compliance to enforce the act for the entire Congress. The office will issue three separate sets of regulations — one for the House, one for the Senate and one for joint offices and instrumentalities.

COURTS

Hiring organizers reviewed

The U.S. Supreme Court has agreed to decide whether federal labor law protects paid union organizers from being denied jobs or being fired because of their union activities.

The case, National Labor Relations Board vs. Town & Country Electric, began when the company, a non-union subcontractor at Boise Cascade's paper mill project in International Falls, Minn., refused to interview Electrical Workers for jobs. The IBEW encouraged its unemployed members to apply, and if hired, to try and organize the site. The union planned to make up the difference between the workers' pay and union scale.

One IBEW member, Malcom Hansen, was hired and then fired after three days on the job for talking to workers about a union. The NLRB ruled the company violated federal labor law by firing Hansen and for not interviewing the other IBEW members for jobs because of their union activity.

The 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals reversed the NLRB ruling.

Journalists win back pay

In the second case of its kind in a month, a federal appeals court ruled that most newspaper reporters, editors and photographers must be paid overtime under federal labor law.

The decision by the 1st U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed a lower court ruling that the Concord (N.H.) Monitor must pay almost $21,000 to 10 reporters and two photographers. The key issue was how much weight to give a 45-year-old Labor Department policy stating that to be ineligible for overtime, a journalist's primary duties must require "invention, imagination or talent."

"All reporters approach their jobs professionally. But to try to hide behind that and try to avoid paying them overtime is despicable," said Newspaper Guild President Chuck Dale.

The Monitor decision is at odds with one last month in a federal court in Washington. In that case, Judge Norma Holloway Johnson ruled that a former Washington Post reporter was "an artistic professional" who was exempt from overtime provisions.

That reporter, Tom Sherwood, filed an appeal Jan. 25 with the support of TNG.

Worker bias rights affirmed

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled unanimously that employers cannot escape anti-discrimination lawsuits even if they discover previous wrongdoing that justifies firing the offended employee.

In McKennon vs. Nashville Banner, the court said employers should not have to rehire or pay further damages to the employee, but they can be liable for back pay.

The decision reinstates an age bias lawsuit against the Nashville Banner Publishing Co. by Christine McKennon, who worked for the company for 39 years before being laid off at age 62. She sued, claiming her layoff was motivated by age bias. During a deposition in her lawsuit, she admitted photocopying confidential company documents, which is against company policy. A few days later the company fired her again for violating company rules.

Two federal courts dismissed her lawsuit, saying her misconduct made it irrelevant whether the employer discriminated. The Supreme Court disagreed.

NLRB modifies ALJ roles

The National Labor Relations Board will begin a one-year experiment Feb. 1 giving its administrative law judges more latitude in resolving and expediting unfair labor practice cases.

The changes will allow the chief ALJ to assign a judge other than the trial judge to conduct settlement negotiations with the parties and will give the judges discretion to dispense with briefs and to issue bench decisions.

Although many cases may not be suitable for the new procedures, the board said the procedures would probably work best in cases "that turn on a very straightforward credibility issue; cases involving one-day hearings; cases involving a well-settled legal issue where there is no dispute of the facts; short-record single-issue cases; or cases in which a party defaults by not appearing at the hearing."



Don Byers/HERE

Members of Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Local 32 and Service Employees Local 82 demonstrate against Washington's Carr organization Jan. 19 as part of an ongoing campaign. The workers were protesting a "glass ceiling" that keeps immigrant and minority workers in low-paying, entry-level jobs.

Reforms ensure worker pensions

Amendment to GATT legislation draws praise

By James B. Parks

Sweeping pension reforms included in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade guarantee that employers ante up to cover pension obligations and restrict their ability to exploit those funds.

While the GATT may be harmful to many workers, the pension rider will help secure the retirement income for many others, labor officials said.

"The AFL-CIO has supported this kind of pension reform because it limits corporate ability to skew pensions to the highest earners and to manipulate funding," said Theresa Ghilarducci, the AFL-CIO's assistant employee benefits director.

"Workers, retirees, business and taxpayers are winners," said Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich. "These are comprehensive reforms, targeted to the most severely underfunded pension plans."

The provisions contained in the Retirement Protection Act of 1994 were tacked on to the GATT, which was opposed by the AFL-CIO, because Congress was legally required to make up for the lost tariff revenues in the agreement. The new revenue will come from higher premium payments by underfunded plans to the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp., which insures workers' pension benefits.

Besides building the pension insurance fund, the reforms will force most underfunded single-employer plans to come up to full funding within five to seven years. The reforms will make funds more secure by changing the way in which companies are allowed to estimate their pension liability. Previously, companies could keep down their pension fund contributions by manipulating outdated federal mortality tables and inflating their projected earnings through interest on pension investments.

The reforms also will increase the PBGC's authority to keep the plans more secure, Reich said. Companies with large unfunded plans will be required to provide PBGC with detailed financial and actuarial information. Privately held firms with large underfunded plans will be required to give PBGC advance notice of business transactions that might jeopardize pension security.

Each year, funds that are less than 90 percent funded also must notify each plan participant in simple, understandable language that the plan is underfunded and that full benefits are not guaranteed by the PBGC.

The maximum pension benefit that will be guaranteed by PBGC in 1995 will be $2,573.86 per month, up from $2,556.82 in 1994, under the bill.

The PBGC also is designing a program to find retirees owed benefits from fully funded plans that were terminated, Slate said. Ironically, shortly after passage of the bill, the PBGC reported that underfunding in single-employer plans rose to $71 billion in 1993, up 34 percent from the previous year. But Reich, who chairs PBGC's board of directors, estimated the new reforms will reduce the underfunding by two-thirds within 15 years and erase PBGC's $2.9 billion deficit within a decade.

Eastern trustee cashes in as pensioners lose out

Over the objections of both the Machinists and the federal pension insurance agency, a federal judge approved compensation of $4.25 million to Eastern Airlines' bankruptcy trustee.

The award to Martin Shugrue, who has been dismantling the company since 1991, comes while the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp. has not recovered one cent of a $565 million claim against Eastern for unfunded pension benefits.

"PBGC will not sit by and let recovery for the pension underfunding be reduced simply to provide more compensation for the bankruptcy trustee, without proof that he is entitled," PBGC Executive Director Martin Slate said. The company's unsecured creditors, of which PBGC is the largest, expect to receive between 9 and 16 cents per dollar of allowable claims, he said.

The $4.25 million award brings Shugrue's average annual compensation to about $950,000, more than one-and-one-half times the $600,000 per year that Eastern's last chairman earned.

Oregon workers seek halt to pay-cutting law

Oregon public employee unions have gone to court to prevent the imposition of an initiative to cut public workers' pay.

The initiative, which passed by 976 votes out of more than 1.2 million, would cut state and local workers' pay by 6 percent, prohibit retirees from rolling over unused sick leave and bar unions from negotiating pay raises to cover the cut.

Lawsuits were filed by AFSCME District Council 75, the Oregon Public Employees Union/SEIU and the unaffiliated Oregon Education Association. The unions filed lawsuits challenging the sick leave rollover provision and another disputing the 6 percent cut in workers' pay.

The unions say the initiative violates their contracts, especially by eliminating the rollover of unused sick leave — in effect cutting pensions for members who retire this year.

Pensions could be cut by $100 to $200 monthly, according to the unions. An average Oregon public employee who will retire this year will receive just more than $1,000 monthly before the cut.

Mexican crisis further evidence of NAFTAmath

By David Kameras

President Clinton's decision to bypass Congress to put together a rescue plan for the Mexican peso of up to $47.5 billion underscores the political and economic folly of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

The recent 40 percent devaluation of the peso, now down 50 percent from a year ago, had put Clinton's loan guarantee proposal on a bumpy track in Congress, where NAFTA clearly had lost its luster after one year. The bailout plan increasingly was seen as mostly benefiting Mexican politicians.

But his replacement strategy, achieved through an executive order, also poses substantial risks to U.S. taxpayers. In addition to drawing contributions from international financial organizations, the White House plans to drain up to $20 billion from the Exchange Equalization Fund, a $25 billion government account that exists to protect the dollar, not the peso, from the effects of currency fluctuations.

The AFL-CIO had urged Congress not to mount a rash rescue mission, but rather to consider the loan guarantee proposal as an occasion to address the serious flaws in NAFTA.

"Rather than rushing to bankroll failed policies of the past, the United States should promote respect for worker rights, long overdue wage increases for impoverished Mexican workers and policies to ensure a more equitable distribution of income — measures that would place Mexico on the path toward sustainable development," the federation said.

Addressing a meeting of the Inter-American Development Bank in Caracas, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Thomas R. Donahue noted that the loan guarantee package was designed "not to help workers, but to protect the assets of investors who speculated in foreign currency markets."

"This tragedy should be a cautionary tale for all of us," he said. "It suggests, at least, that so-called free trade is not a panacea for our problems. . . . We must recognize that the relationships between our countries are complicated and, if anything, we need to deepen and widen the negotiation agenda to include such items as capital markets and most certainly labor rights and standards."

While in Caracas, Donahue met with trade union officials from Mexico, Canada and Chile to discuss common ground on the Clinton administration's proposal to bring Chile into the NAFTA. The AFL-CIO and CUT, the Chilean labor federation, last year urged the two nations to avoid accession to the flawed NAFTA, but rather to negotiate a bilateral trade agreement that directly addresses protection of labor rights and standards.

U.S. communities will be hurt by the peso devaluation. With low-wage production costs going even lower in Mexico, U.S. companies will have an added incentive to relocate their manufacturing operations south of the border. Consequently, U.S. workers will lose their jobs and those still working will feel greater downward pressure on their wages.

"We were promised that NAFTA would create jobs in the United States by increasing our exports to Mexico," said V. Daniel Radford, executive secretary-treasurer of the Cincinnati AFL-CIO. "Instead, Mexico's economic and currency policies are aimed at decreasing our exports to Mexico, while encouraging our factories to move there.

"Mexican workers lose. American workers lose. Only the investors win," he said.

Mexico's new austerity package hits Mexican workers especially hard, with wage increases limited to a maximum of 7 percent in the face of double-digit inflation. Under NAFTA, Mexican workers were supposed to buy U.S. goods with their new affluence. But they will find those goods priced even further beyond their reach.

Meanwhile, the devalued peso will create a $750 million bonanza for U.S. employers operating in the maquiladoras. These companies should be required to share this windfall with the poorest of Mexican workers by increasing their wages to compensate for declining real wages, the AFL-CIO pointed out.

In the wake of the currency crisis, Reps. Peter A. DeFazio (D-Ore.) and Marcy Kaptur (D-Ohio) have introduced legislation to pull the United States out of NAFTA.

"NAFTA is not only a job killer, it has the potential to trigger the biggest U.S. taxpayer bailout since the savings-and-loan fiasco," DeFazio said.

Meanwhile, the U.S. National Administrative Office, the agency reviewing labor complaints filed under NAFTA, will hold a hearing Feb. 13 in San Antonio regarding charges that Sony Corp. has violated Mexican labor law.

The Sony petition, filed by four labor and human rights groups, indict the employer for blocking efforts by its workers to freely associate and to organize. A similar petition against General Electric Co. was withdrawn by the unaffiliated United Electrical Workers, which accused the NAO of conducting a "whitewash" investigation.

WORLD

Indonesia cracks down

With the Asian trade summit long gone, Indonesian officials tightened the reins on unionists even as they sought to retain trade privileges under the U.S. Generalized System of Preferences by claiming new adherence to worker rights.

Labor leader Muchtar Pakpahan, reportedly in deteriorating health and denied access to medical care and legal counsel, was given an additional three to four years in prison after his appeal was rejected. Pakpahan was convicted of inciting a riot even though he was on another island at the time of the incident.

In an obvious effort to influence the Clinton administration's "suspended" review of Jakarta's GSP status, officials announced that fines for violating Indonesian labor laws would increase from $50 to $25,000. Indonesia recently raised its minimum wage, now ranging from $1.33 to $2.20 a day.

Social clause 'fundamental'

The issue of a social clause in trade agreements will not go away "because it is about fundamental human rights," Bill Brett, chair of the Workers Group at the International Labor Organization, told an ILO gathering in Washington.

Brett, invited by the Washington ILO office to elaborate on his new book, "International Labor in the 21st Century," said employers and Third World governments wrongly see protectionism in the social clause, which he defined as internationally accepted labor standards that include prohibitions against forced and child labor, as well as assurance for worker freedom of association.

In keeping with the tripartite tradition of the ILO, Abraham Katz, U.S. employer representative, and Andrew J. Samet, associate deputy U.S. undersecretary of labor, commented on Brett's report, as did Phil Fishman, assistant director of the AFL-CIO international affairs department.

Cuban unionist flees

Rafael Gutierrez, a founder of the independent Cuban Workers' Trade Union (USTC), is now at a U.S. naval base camp at Guantanamo after being notified of a pending arrest and prison term.

Gutierrez was held incommunicado by Cuban state security forces for seven months last year, prompting a plea for his release from AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland and other international labor officials.

Gutierrez fled Cuba when he was informed that he was going to be arrested, tried for "subversion" and sentenced to an eight-year prison term.



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

The RUGMARK tag means no children were used to produce this carpet.

RUGMARK calls child labor on carpet

With the unveiling of the first handmade Oriental rug bearing the RUGMARK label, child labor opponents geared up to educate consumers about the exploitation of children around the world.

The RUGMARK tag identifies a carpet as one that was produced without the work of children. Some 1 million South Asian children are employed in the carpet industry and subjected to daily abuse.

Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa), sponsor of legislation in the last Congress to penalize employers who abuse children, was presented with a RUGMARKed carpet by Gangadhar Dubey, representing carpet manufacturers who have disavowed child labor.

"The launching of this initiative is just one more indication that the tide is turning against child labor throughout the world," said Harkin. "I will keep fighting in this new Congress to help put a stop to the use of abusive and exploitive child labor in the world today," he said.

Linda Golodner, executive director of the National Consumer League and co-chair of the Child Labor Coalition, said her organization would be distributing an organizing kit to community groups to help educate consumers.

Many of the working children will die before they turn 12 years old. The survivors are forced to work more than eight hours a day and are kept hungry so they will stay awake and work longer hours.

"Labor, religious, women's, child advocacy, human rights, senior citizen, parent, professional and consumer groups have a big stake in seeing that children are not exploited," said Golodner.

In writing retailers, Golodner said, tell them "as a consumer, I do not want to be a party to such abuse and exploitation. As one of your customers, I ask you to make a commitment to do likewise."

The RUGMARK campaign includes an effort to get a commitment from importers to self-impose a 2 percent surcharge on carpets earmarked for the rehabilitation and education of former child workers.

For more information on the kits, call Darlene Adkins at 202/639-8140.

Gephardt urges code of conduct for businesses

By James B. Parks

In a rousing defense of working people, House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.) called for U.S. corporations to adhere to a code of conduct here and abroad.

Gephardt said he would introduce legislation calling for the code to be based on the best practices of successful, innovative companies that meet the needs of all stakeholders: stock owners, workers and their families, customers and suppliers.

Some of America's most successful and innovative companies, like Harley-Davidson and Magma Copper, have prospered because they cooperate with workers and their unions in developing new ways of working and share the results of productivity with the employees who produce it, Gephardt told an Economic Policy Institute conference.

To succeed, he said, businesses need to understand that "if workers have a real voice in their company through an independent representatives of their choice, if they share the rewards as well as the risks, if they're actually paid for their performance, then they can work together to become more creative and more productive."

Harley was "at death's door 10 years ago. But then they sat down and realized that Harley-Davidson had to get its employees and customers involved in making a better product. The results were so dramatic that since 1986, Harley stock has soared from $1 a share to $27 and employment has nearly doubled.

Magma Copper, once "the worst mine in America" turned around when a new owner dropped the union-busting of his predecessors and asked workers for their ideas on how to make the company work better. Since 1988, productivity is up by 86 percent and stock prices have jumped from $6 a share to $16, he said.

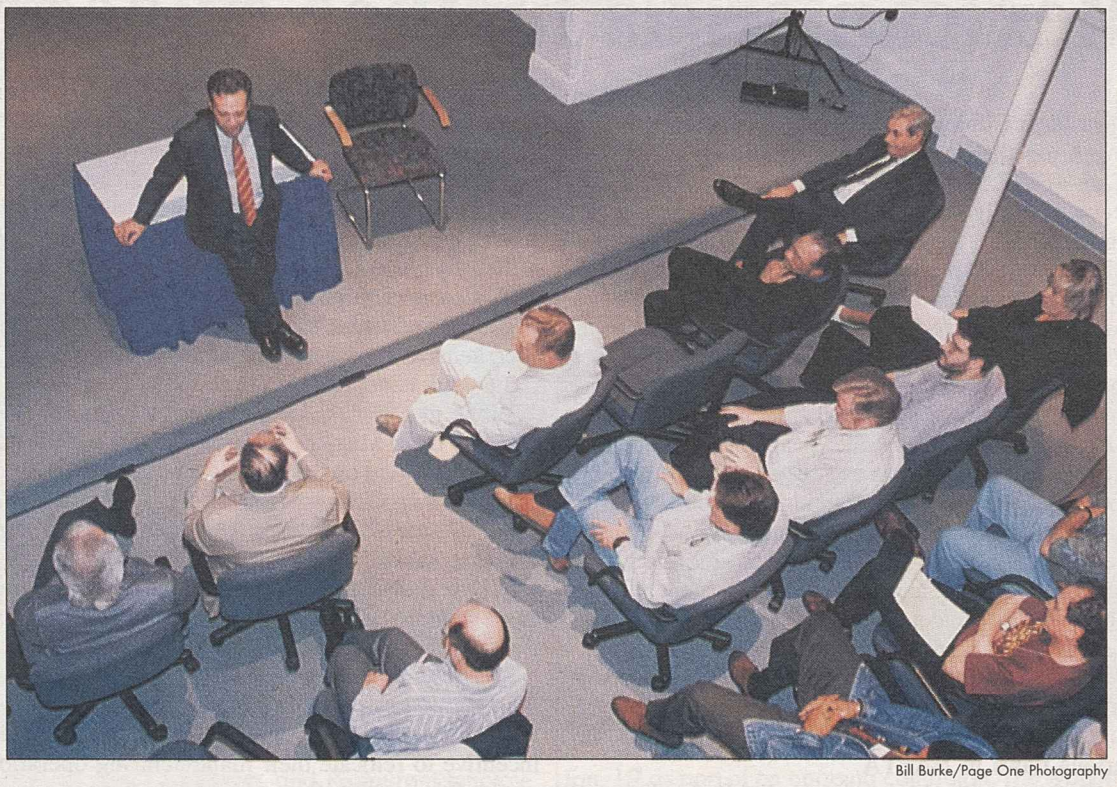
Others Gephardt cited included Saturn, Anheuser-Busch, Ben and Jerry's, Motorola, Starbuck's and Inland Steel. Many of these companies gained success, Gephardt pointed out, by working with unions, "not by spending their life bashing" them.

"I realize the American workplace is changing, and some companies are succeeding without unions," he said, "but experience shows that when they're fully engaged, unions can be a crucial part of the solution."

The code of conduct would demand, Gephardt said, "a commitment to the notion of pay for performance, insuring that productivity, quality and creativity profit the people who are actually providing it."

Gephardt said the legislation would not try to have government run U.S. businesses. "But we can condition any tax break to business on the adoption of the Best Practices code of conduct, not just in America, but wherever our companies do business. We can condition the adoption of every single trade agreement on that nation's adoption of the code or a similar commitment to their working people."

"We can and should pass a law that says the U.S. government will not buy goods and services from any foreign or domestic company that doesn't follow the code of conduct," he said. But Gephardt cautioned that the changes in individual companies "must go hand in hand with changes in our financial markets to encourage companies to think about growth in terms of quarter centuries, not quarterly reports."



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich talks with union leaders at George Meany Center for Labor Studies.

Cooperative jobsites studied

Hit-and-miss workplace success stories not enough

Worker participation programs cannot be said to be doing very well as long as only a tiny percentage of workplaces have them and "two blocks away it's the stone age" of fractious worker-management relations.

That was the consensus from a discussion between Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich and local representatives of four unions with extensive experience in setting up model workplaces: UAW, Clothing and Textile Workers, Steelworkers and Communications Workers.

Companies may be drawn to union involvement only after they watch their own top-down schemes fall short of the employee involvement needed.

No one was claiming a magic wand on how workers and their unions can gain more cooperation — and indeed the trade unionists told Reich they can find "the stone age" in other units with the same employer. But with Reich, they did identify some trends:

- Investment from groups like the California public employees pension fund (CalPers) that demand worker involvement may spur management interest. CalPers, like any investor, is attracted to the higher profitability that worker involvement brings.
- Firms may be drawn to union involvement only after they watch their own top-down schemes fall short of the employee involvement needed. But management's interest in changing the National Labor Relations Act to legalize company unions shows that lesson hasn't been widely learned.
- Traumatic experiences, like the near collapse of an enterprise, can be found in the background of many of the most successful ventures.

CWA President Morton Bahr played host to the discussion at the AFL-CIO's George Meany Center for Labor Studies, where the trade unionists had spent four days working on the topic before meeting with Reich.

Bahr said former Steelworkers President Lynn Williams was instrumental in setting up the four-union sessions, which the studies center calls the Labor Leadership Institute. He also noted the effectiveness of Reich in pitching worker safety and health to employers as a plus for their economic well-being. He said Reich recognized that "collective bargaining is the only effective way" of reaching Reich's ideal of the New American Workplace.

Reich told the group that whenever he meets with workers like them who have experience with employee involvement, he is always told how easily "management can turn their backs, leaving us holding the bag."

Ironically, Reich's recent work has included getting bargaining started again in strike situations at Caterpillar and Bridgestone/Firestone. Each was once extolled as an ideal employer in the "worker involvement" mode — Caterpillar before current CEO Donald Fites took over in 1987 and Bridgestone when the Japanese firm first bought Firestone and struck a cooperative deal with the Rubber Workers in 1989.

Reich said the determination to push ahead with the cooperative workplace is essential now that 75 percent of today's layoffs are permanent. Still, the panelists told him, working Americans hear much more discussion of job training than they do of the location of programs they can join immediately.

Employers find family leave inexpensive and easy

By Colleen M. O'Neill

With preparations underway for final implementation of the Family and Medical Leave Act, studies by employer groups show lower costs and easier compliance than expected.

Final rules on the act are slated to go into effect April 6. The original implementation date was pushed back 60 days by the Labor Department to accommodate concern over changes from the interim rules in definitions and employer notification requirements.

A Republican-sponsored movement to establish a moratorium on regulation retroactive to Nov. 9, 1994, is a potential threat to the legislation, however, since it would suspend the final rules in any case.

The law provides for an employee to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave each year for the birth or adoption of a baby or the illness of the employee or a family member. Any company that employs at least 50 people is covered by the FMLA.

The leave need not be taken consecutively; the chronic nature of illness or scheduling of such treatments as chemotherapy and physical therapy may dictate flexible schedules.

Also, a worker using FMLA is entitled to the same medical benefits that active employees receive, and does not suffer a loss in seniority rights. Upon return, employers must offer the old job or an equivalent one.

Meanwhile, two recent surveys have shown the ease with which affected companies have complied with the new regulation. A Labor Policy Association study concluded the cost of compliance for 123 survey respondents had not been as high as expected.

Eighty-five percent of the respondents already had family leave policies when the FMLA took effect in 1994, and the majority of companies spent less than $500,000 to come into compliance. Respondents cited two aspects of FMLA that eased compliance: requirements for advance notice of foreseeable leave and written medical certification.

A similar survey by The Conference Board reported that most respondents had leave benefits already in compliance with the FMLA and that few employees were using the program. In fact, of 29 respondents providing solid data, slightly more than 1 percent of employees took family or medical leave.

The Conference Board study found that the average time taken was just over nine weeks, with nearly 90 percent of leaves taken in the first year for the employee's own medical condition.

Most costs incurred under FMLA were administrative, the survey found, and it called them"moderate."

The Greening of the Jobs Market



Laborers photo

Members of the Laborers "clean up" a toxic site at the union's Danbury, Conn., training facility.

Unions seize opportunity of environmental cleanup

By Candice Johnson

Seeing opportunities in greener pastures, a number of workers and their unions are preparing for the field of environmental cleanup.

In fact, contrary to the cry of the deregulators on Capitol Hill, environmental regulation has had a positive effect on overall employment, albeit a small one, according to a new study by the Economic Policy Institute.

After reviewing two decades of research, Skidmore College research associate Eban Goodstein pointed to such activities as recycling, sewage facility construction and manufacture of air pollution control equipment that make intensive use of labor.

AFL-CIO unions are well aware of these potential job markets and are busy making sure members are ready today for the work of the future. They're developing state-of-the-art training programs and working in partnerships with contractors to supply that expertise.

The Laborers, Operating Engineers and Teamsters have taken the lead in providing such training to members, and the Carpenters, Painters and other unions also are participating.

Unions — with some federal grants — have built training curricula that surpass the federal standards established by the Environmental Protection Agency, Occupational Safety and Health Administration and Department of Defense for working with hazardous materials, asbestos, lead and other such substances.

And unions are marketing the skills of these trained workers, along with other resources, to contractors who are realizing they can rely on labor as a full partner.

"As we move into the 21st century, demand for clean technologies will be the driving force behind industrial job creation," Goodstein notes. "Ensuring that U.S. firms develop and maintain the lead in these fields will allow the country to capitalize on high-wage employment opportunities in environmental protection."

The Laborers, under the Tri-funds joint program, are doing just that, training workers for cleanup projects from nuclear waste and toxic chemicals to asbestos and lead.

The Tri-funds are the Laborers' three labor-management efforts: the Laborers-Associated General Contractors education and training fund; Laborers' health and safety fund; and Laborers-employers cooperation and education trust.

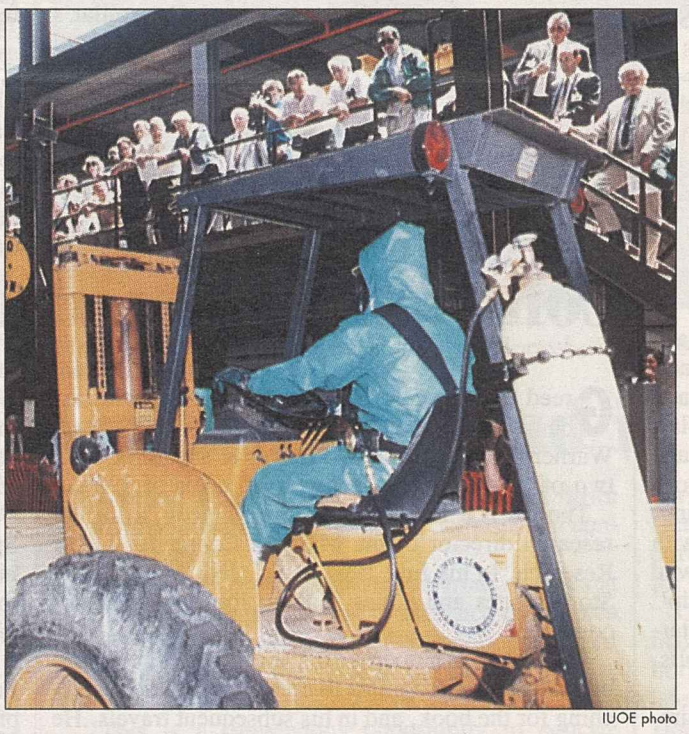
The program has trained nearly 40,000 union members through intensive course work, exams and rigorous hands-on instruction at simulated cleanup sites at 23 regional training centers and three mobile facilities. Training for asbestos abatement was begun in 1981; an industry-recognized hazardous waste course was begun in 1987; and lead abatement training got under way in 1990.

In 1993, LIUNA President Arthur A. Coia established the Environmental Remediation Task Force as a means to build stronger partnerships with contractors involved in working on environmental cleanup projects.

The group tracks every cleanup project of $3 million or more, according to Terence O'Sullivan, a special assistant to Coia and head of the task force, with the goal of offering contractors "one-stop shopping."

"We want to be part of the bid, part of the process, to build a real partnership," he said.

Under the program, LIUNA staff members monitor requests for proposals and determine how many training-certified workers are available in the area.



IUOE photo

Operating Engineer demonstrates hazmat training at exposition.

Fourteen contractors have signed a national agreement in slightly more than a year — with some using it many times on separate projects for a total spending amount of about $800 million, he said.

"We're a proven resource to contractors that need to be competitive," O'Sullivan said. "Contractors we have never before worked with are seeking to use this agreement again and again and again."

Many contractors use the union's marketing materials in their bid presentations, O'Sullivan said, noting that the program is an opportunity to build relationships with non-union firms, who benefit from the union's expertise in health and safety issues and other on-the-job concerns.

The Operating Engineers, through the National Environmental Remediation Project, also are training members and marketing those skills to contractors, tracking bids for cleanup projects. The union has approximately 20 contractors signed on to its national hazardous materials contract, which covers all aspects of the cleanup job except wages and fringe-benefit issues.

More than 40,000 workers have attended classes at the union's West Virginia training center. The union program also offers training for management representatives, contractors and government officials from occupational safety and health and environmental protection agencies, said Donald R. Carson, administrator of the union's hazardous materials training program.

Training runs the gamut, from asbestos and lead abatement to radiation, he said. The center is listed by the Department of Defense as an accredited training facility and also provides training for workers in the metal trades on Department of Energy cleanup projects.

The Carpenters, through the union's health and safety fund, for many years have been preparing workers to work safely on a variety of environmental cleanup activities.

Training is provided by a network of master trainers, supplemented by local trainers, at the facilities of more than 200 joint apprentice committees.

The joint labor-management operation benefits both sides, as workers receive high-quality safety and health training and contractors gain the advantage of a highly trained, high-quality work force.

While some members are involved in hazardous waste or asbestos cleanup, it is in the area of lead abatement that the UBC — along with IBP, Cement Masons, IUOE, Roofers and Sheet Metal Workers — has been especially active.

An initiative signed by those six unions established a nationwide program to train workers and public housing residents in environmental cleanup skills.

A pilot project begun last October has graduated 26 students as certified lead abatement workers — including nine residents of public housing in San Francisco.

The program featured four days of classroom work and a simulated cleanup effort.

Workers are available to help clean up lead-based paint throughout the authority's properties.

Another 10 classes are set for the Bay area, with other projects under way in more than 10 other cities.

The Teamsters provide training on environmental cleanup at seven centers leading to certification in cleaning up substances ranging from hazardous materials to chemicals to radiation.

Currently, the union offers a 48-hour hazardous waste course, an eight-hour refresher course and a four-hour transportation awareness level training that enables IBT members to comply with the requirements of the hazardous materials standard. For Department of Energy cleanup sites, workers can take a course on radiation.

The IBT's department of safety and health coordinates the training and provides some oversight, with field staff also working on the curriculum, said union safety and health director LaMont Byrd. The program receives a grant from the National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences.

UNION NEWS

Religious leaders call for justice at Staley

Continued from Page 1

and peace to a hurting community,'' the Rev. Martin Mangan said.

''You clearly have the power to settle this dispute,'' Mangan said to Tate & Lyle CEO Neil Shaw. ''My question to you is, 'Will you help, please? Will you help?' ''

Mangan was joined by clergy from Britain and the United States as he read the statement, which was endorsed by 400 U.S. religious leaders. Mangan is pastor of St. James Catholic Church in Decatur, where many of the 760 locked-out Staley workers worship.

The statement was another in a series of actions by the religious community to draw attention to the moral and ethical issues raised by the dispute.

The employees, formerly Allied Industrial Workers, were locked out June 27, 1993. The company demanded that workers agree to unlimited subcontracting, the loss of several hundred bargaining unit jobs, 12-hour rotating shifts with no premium pay and the gutting of seniority protections. When the union balked, the workers were locked out and replaced by scabs.

The AFL-CIO, through its organization and field services department, is providing assistance to the Staley workers, who also have benefited from the solidarity of other union members on strike in Decatur — UAW members at Caterpillar and Rubber Workers at Bridgestone/Firestone.

The lockout also has forged increased unity among the unions representing Tate & Lyle workers worldwide. Kurt Stand, North American officer of the IUF, the international federation of food and allied workers, told the stockholders his federation supported the Staley workers.

He reminded them that Staley's largest customer, Miller Brewing Co., publicly announced it would no longer buy products from the company and pledged to spread the campaign to Staley's other patrons. ''We will simply have to continue the route of urging Staley's customers to find alternative suppliers if the company refuses to settle the Decatur dispute,'' Stand said.

The UPIU is urging fellow union members to write Coca Cola and Pepsi, Staley's two largest remaining customers, to protest their continued use of Staley-produced corn sweetener.

The IUF support was translated into action as the 2.1-million-member federation agreed to convert an ad hoc committee of Tate & Lyle employees into an official IUF regional body.

Shaw, under pressure from the trade unionists at the stockholders' meeting, promised that Staley would renew negotiations any time the union wanted. But no talks are scheduled between the two sides, said UPIU spokesman Dick Blin.

Watts reminded Shaw that last year he promised ''fast track'' negotiations to end the dispute. ''Despite your personal assurance last year that we would start negotiations with a 'clean sheet' to find a solution to this dispute, when we got back to the bargaining table in Decatur, we were faced with the same union-busting lawyer and the same union-busting agenda,'' Watts said.

BARGAINING

GM strike ends quickly

A five-day strike that crippled several General Motors Corp. plants and threatened to shut down all the company's production lines ended when members of the UAW overwhelmingly approved a new contract.

The new pact, ratified Jan. 22, calls for GM to hire 700 new workers at its AC Rochester Electronics plant in Flint, Mich., and to bring back some production contracted out to other companies. The new workers will start out at 70 percent of the UAW wage of $18 per hour and will reach full scale in three years.

Workers at the 6,800-employee plant had complained about long, often seven-day workweeks that threatened their safety and health. The plant makes fuel filters, spark plugs and electronic components. The strike, which began Jan. 17, forced GM to suspend operations at 10 plants.

Bakers go back to work

Klosterman Bakery workers in Cincinnati are back on the job after ratification of a three-year pact.

Sixty-four members of Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers Local 57 went on strike last June 19 over the company's unfair labor practices and demands for givebacks. National Labor Relations Board charges against Klosterman still are pending.

The end of the strike could mean ''a new day'' with the company, said BCT President Frank Hurt, who expressed optimism that ''a meaningful partnership'' with the company could be extended to other Klosterman plants in Springfield, Ohio, and Indianapolis, where workers are seeking to join the union.

Workers regained most of what Klosterman had implemented unilaterally before the strike. Wages now start between $11 and $12.10, with a 30-cents-an-hour increase slated for the second year and a 40-cents-an-hour increase in the third year.

HERE, Mark Hopkins agree

More than two months of strikes ended in a new five-year contract for some 200 Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees at Mark Hopkins InterContinental Hotel in San Francisco.

The contract includes a successorship clause that guarantees workers will keep their jobs if the hotel is sold.

The contract parallels agreements negotiated this past fall between the union and 16 other hotels around the city. Those agreements include wage increases each year, increased employer contributions to the pension fund, new child and elder care benefits and the extension of health care coverage to domestic partners.

The workers walked out Oct. 6 after failing to persuade the hotel to agree to terms negotiated with the other hotels. Hotel negotiators were prepared to accept the wage and benefit provisions but wanted certain work rule changes. The 10-week strike was the longest hotel walkout in San Francisco in 50 years, the union said.

UAW resumes Caterpillar talks

With the help of federal mediators, officials of the UAW and Caterpillar Inc. met face to face for the first time in seven months.

The Jan. 31 meeting in Louisville, Ky., ended after less than 30 minutes, but negotiations were not suspended. Both sides made opening statements and then decided to meet privately with federal mediators to discuss an agenda and procedures to be used later in the talks, said David Helfert, spokesman for the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. No date for future talks has yet been set.

The 40-member UAW delegation was led by Secretary-Treasurer Bill Casstevens and Caterpillar's team was led by Vice President Wayne Zimmerman. Casstevens heads the union's Caterpillar department.

John Calhoun Wells, director of the FMCS, welcomed the reopening of talks, saying, ''There's an old Chinese adage that the journey of 1,000 miles begins with one step, and today we're taking that one step.''

Some 14,000 UAW members walked out June 21 over unfair labor practices. The strike, which affects eight plants in Illinois, Pennsylvania and Colorado, is the longest in the history of the company, surpassing a 205-day strike in 1982-83.

The last contract expired in September 1991. The UAW ended a 163-day strike in 1992 and began an in-house campaign to win a better contract.

Since the strike began, Caterpillar has used temporary workers and supervisors to keep up production. Average unit production during the six months from August 1994 to January 1995 dropped from 17.2 vehicles per day to 7.5 at final assembly plants affected by the strike, the union reported.

The union has filed more than 120 unfair labor practice charges with the National Labor Relations Board. The company claims the strike is over economic issues. The distinction is important because under federal law, Caterpillar cannot use permanent replacements for workers involved in an unfair labor practice strike, but can if the strike is over economic issues.

Companies feasting on federal 'candy'

By Colleen M. O'Neill

Greed and uncontrolled corporate welfare are demonstrated by such union dodgers as Borg-Warner Security Corp. and Briggs & Stratton Corp., two of the 10 worst 'candy store' deals of 1994.

The list is a follow-up by Greg LeRoy, a former research director of the Midwest Center for Labor Research, to his July 1994 book, ''No More Candy Store: States and Cities Making Job Subsidies Accountable.''

LeRoy found numerous instances of terrible abuse of government programs to create jobs while researching for the book, and in his subsequent travels. He then took nominations and formed his list of ''corporate welfare at its worst,'' he said.

Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich recently called for an end to corporate welfare, a counterpoint to conservative Republicans' attacks on so-called ''entitlement'' programs.

Leading the list of bad deals were those made by Briggs & Stratton, which used a government block grant to shift jobs from Milwaukee to lower-wage Missouri, and Borg-Warner's Pony Express Courier division, which uses high turnover in low-quality entry-level positions to eat up more credit under the federal Targeted Jobs Tax Credit program.

Nearly 5,000 members of the Paperworkers at Briggs & Stratton recently ratified a new contract that includes a severance package, an immediate $1-an-hour increase for skilled workers, higher annual wage hikes and jumps in shift premiums. Still, the workers face the loss of 2,000 jobs the company is moving to low-wage, non-union plants in Mexico, Kentucky, Missouri and Tennessee. The company plans to help pay for some of the moves through Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant Funds subsidies.

The Teamsters, who have waged an ongoing battle for a first contract for drivers at Pony Express, nominated Borg-Warner, noting the company often seeks TJTC certification after hiring workers it would anyway. It then encourages turnover to continue using the credit. In fact, IBT says the company has received $47 million in tax subsidiaries using that scheme.

Also included on the top 10 list were the Schutt Sports Group of Salem, Ill., nominated by the Clothing and Textile Workers. Schutt also accepted a low-interest HUD grant to relocate 60 jobs from Knoxville, Tenn., to Salem.

The Chemical Workers put forth American Home Products/Davis & Geck for moving more than 600 production jobs from Connecticut to Puerto Rico to take advantage of a federal tax loophole.

Other union nominees include Methanol One in Alabama, tapped by the Central Alabama chapter of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, for job subsidies costing between $300,000 to $3.3 million per job, and Blue Water Fibre of Port Huron, Mich., which according to the Detroit and Southeastern Michigan Carpenters District Council accepted more than $81 million in aid from Michigan and then built a recycling mill with 85 percent out-of-state labor.

The $81 million subsidy will net Michigan only 34 permanent jobs.

Also, nominated by the Iowa AFL-CIO, a Canadian steel company named Ipsco demanded — and won in 11 days' time — a package worth $243,000 per job in state aid for 300 jobs.

Others making the list were:

- Exxon, for seeking long-term tax abatements at its complex in Baton Rouge, La., for routine maintenance or federally mandated compliance work done by out-of-state labor.
- Pyramid Corp., for quadruple-dipping on state and local subsidies for the Holyoke Mall in Massachusetts.
- Disney's America, for seeking $163 million in aid from Virginia taxpayers for its history amusement park project.

Step-Up program builds homes, careers for many

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

Public housing residents in San Francisco now have the opportunity to help themselves and others while gaining skills and the potential for long-term employment.

The city is the latest to join the Step-Up program, which provides union training and apprenticeship programs to residents in return for jobs for current members.

Carpenters President Sigurd Lucassen said the program is planned as the precursor of similar training and self-help opportunities for public housing residents across the United States.

"Carpenters have always been eager to help their communities. I am certain that this effort is the first of many that will train unemployed Americans so they can find meaningful jobs."

The program, created by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, is part of a larger plan using federal money to revitalize urban communities and preserve and rebuild public housing. Residents receive training in several areas, including roofing, plumbing, electricity, bricklaying and carpentry.

"This program is a great example of the public/private partnerships President Clinton and Secretary Cisneros have advocated for public housing residents since taking office," said Roberta Achtenberg, HUD's assistant secretary for fair housing and equal opportunity.

The San Francisco Building Trades Council, the San Francisco Housing Authority and Mayor Frank Jordan have signed a memorandum of understanding to get the program under way.

Step-Up first went into effect in Chicago in the fall of 1992, and the Building Trades Councils in Baltimore and St. Paul, Minn., soon extended it to their cities. More than 5,100 public housing units have been rehabilitated by the Step-Up apprentices working side-by-side with trade unionists.

The training initiative in San Francisco will produce skilled workers to help the San Francisco Housing Authority meet HUD's requirement to rid all property of lead-based paint.

It is estimated that three-fourths of buildings constructed before 1978 contain lead paint, and that children under age 7 who occupy lead-painted public housing units are likely to be at risk of lead poisoning.

"The lead-abatement training program in San Francisco is an example of how we can use organized labor's training and apprenticeship programs to help public housing residents begin to develop skills for long-term employment in the construction industry," said Stan Smith, president of the San Francisco Building Trades Council.

"The housing authority intends to spend its construction and renovation funds to make safer housing units, and at the same time, create skill development and job opportunities for our residents," said San Francisco Housing Authority Executive Director Felipe Floresca. "The long-term goal is to transform public housing into neighborhood housing through investing in the job development skills of public housing residents."

The unions will offer up to 10 other courses in the next year. The Painters conducted a training session the week of Jan. 30.

UNION NEWS

URW adopts dues increase

The Rubber Workers voted at a special convention to increase dues to replenish the union's strike fund. The increase is needed due to the ongoing strikes at Bridgestone/Firestone and Pirelli Armstrong, URW President Ken Coss said.

The increase, approved Jan. 24, came about a week after URW presented a new contract offer to the Japanese-owned Bridgestone/Firestone. There was no immediate response, but "we expect additional meetings," said union spokesman Curt Brown.

The dues increase takes effect March 1 and ends Oct. 31, 1996. All members now pay $1 of their monthly dues into the strike fund. With the increase, members will pay into the fund on a sliding scale: $1 per month where plant average hourly wages are under $8; $2 where wages average $8-$11.99; and $3 where wages average more than $12.

AFTRA, SAG plan merger

The board of directors of the Television and Radio Artists and the Screen Actors Guild moved closer to a merger with the approval of a merger framework.

AFTRA President Shelby Scott and SAG President Barry Gordon, in a joint statement, said, "We seem to be nearing the end of a long and sometimes bumpy road. A merger proposal has never before come so far, and we are all extremely grateful to our colleagues on the merger committee who have worked so hard for so long to fashion a plan that is eminently fair to actors, broadcasters and other members of both unions."

The merger proposal must now be approved by the AFTRA and SAG boards of directors.

Layoffs averted at paper

Union members at the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel will receive early retirement, severance pay and other incentives as some 550 full-time jobs disappear with the afternoon paper.

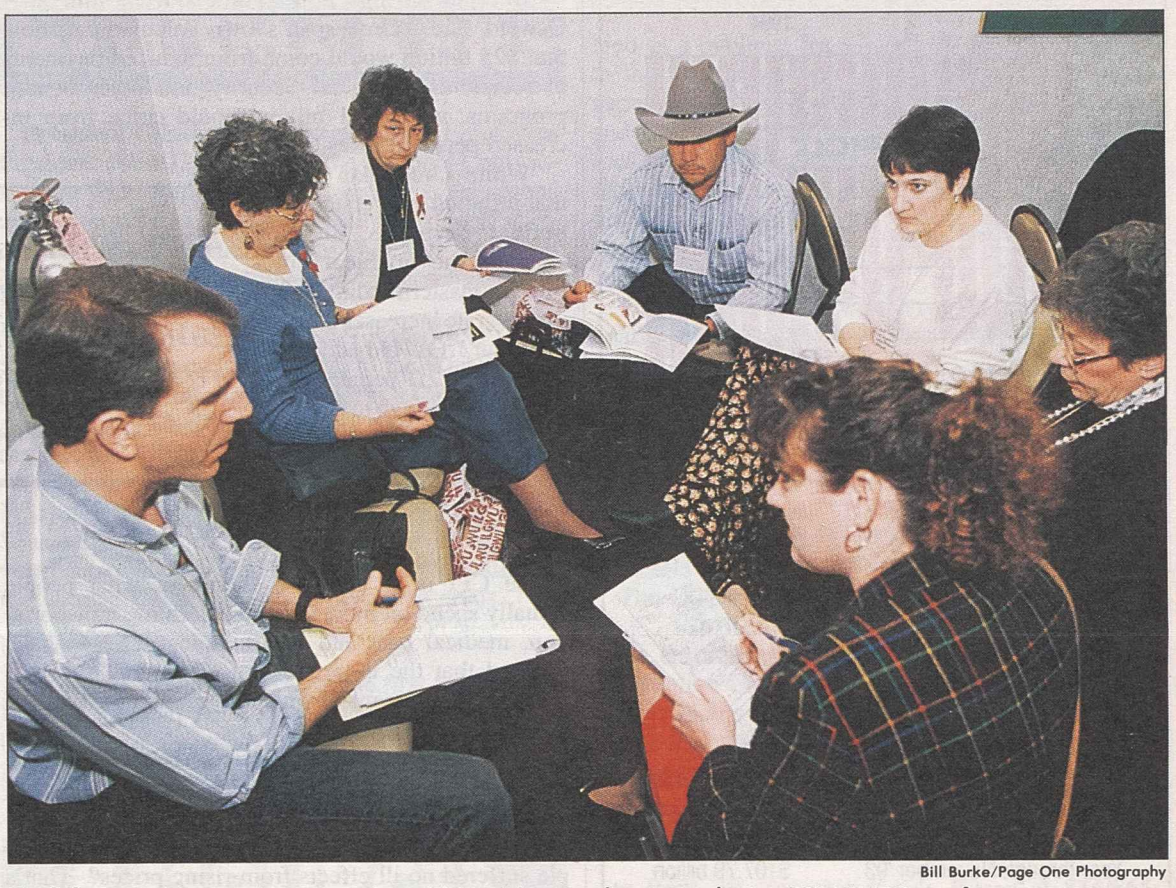
The workers at the newly merged Journal and Sentinel are represented by Teamsters Local 23, Graphic Communications Locals 577-M, 22 and 23, Newspaper Guild Local 51, Communication Workers Local 23, Machinists Local 66 and Electrical Workers Local 494.

Under a 1937 trust set up by former Journal Communications chair Harry Grant, 90 percent of the company's shares are employee-owned. The unions intend to try to negotiate everything, according to Jack Norman, spokesman for the unity council of the eight locals.

SSA workers get back pay

Some 100 federal workers who were denied overtime pay under the Fair Labor Standards Act won an arbitration case that will award hundreds of thousands of dollars in back pay and liquidated damages.

The Social Security Administration employees are represented by Government Employees Local 1923. To date, arbitration wins have yielded more than $30 million in back pay to several categories of SSA workers.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Workshop participants discuss risks of blood-borne diseases during HIV/AIDS conference.

Unions can lead in HIV/AIDS battle

Protecting workers with HIV/AIDS comes down to three imperatives: education, activism and contract language.

That was the prescription drawn from remarks at the National Labor Leaders' Conference on Women and HIV/AIDS, sponsored by the Coalition of Labor Union Women and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"This is a tremendous opportunity to educate women," said CLUW President Gloria Johnson. "It is important that women know what this terrible killer is, what it can do, how you can get it and how you can prevent it."

AIDS is the leading cause of death among all adults aged 25-44. For women in this age group, it is the fourth leading cause of death.

"The labor community is in a unique and vital position to address the epidemic," said Patsy Fleming, national AIDS policy director. "The personal commitment of labor leadership must be obtained and then extended to both union membership and the community at large."

A variety of workshops were held, including one that dispelled the myths about transmission and offered rudimentary facts on the disease. Regina Shaver, co-chair of the Gay and Lesbian Issues Committee for AFSCME District Council 37, said there is no record of HIV/AIDS being contracted through saliva, tears, food or sweat.

"The levels of transmission in order of hierarchy are blood, semen, vaginal secretion and breast milk for nursing mothers," she explained. "Also, in hierarchical order, through the anus, vagina and mouth or head of the penis."

Although the methods of transmission are known, "without testing, you really do not know who's infected and who's not. That is why education is important," said Dr. Margaret Scarlett, senior scientist for the CDC.

Unions must re-examine their contracts to ensure that workers with occupational exposure to blood-borne disease and those infected with HIV/AIDS are adequately protected, one workshop was told by Helene Lynn, director of education for the Florida Education Association.

Revised contract language should address such topics as health benefits, non-discrimination statements, reasonable accommodations and educational programs, she added.

When drafting provisions regarding survivors' benefits, for example, contracts should "define 'family' in the broadest possible terms," advised Fay Yeghissian, education director of the Service Employees. Encompassing definitions of family, she said, will allow domestic partners and other non-traditional household members to collect benefits without hassle.

Contracts should also address AIDS as a catastrophic, long-term illness to qualify as a disability. As such, those infected with HIV/AIDS would qualify for disability insurance and would be covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Priscilla Holman, chief of the CDC's National Private-Sector Partnerships, offered guidance on the resources available to labor for developing HIV/AIDS programs. "Union women have always been at the forefront of our national problems. This epidemic requires that government and labor work in partnership to meeting the challenge in our communities and our work force."

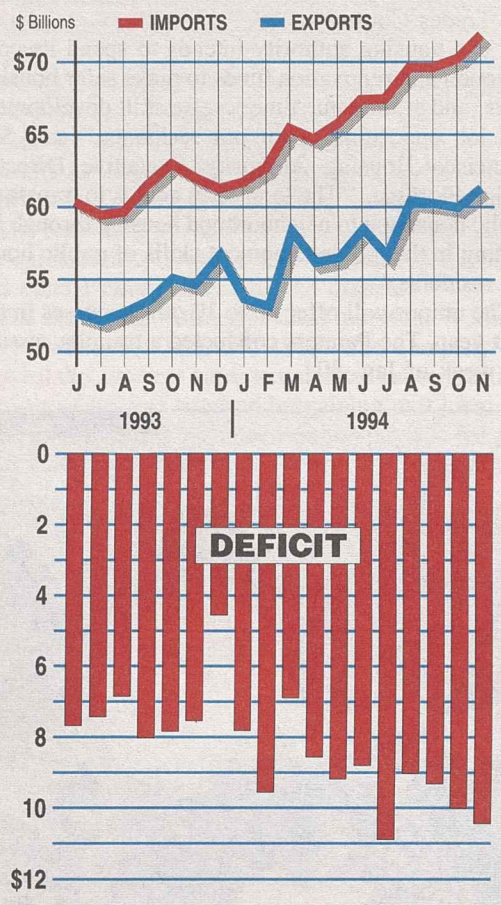
— **Sharolyn A. Rosier**

ECONOMY

DATA

Balance of trade

Goods and services



A flood of imports in November pushed the merchandise trade deficit to $14.5 billion. Even with services factored in, the trade deficit was at $10.5 billion. Trade with Mexico, which once was only measured in surpluses, was in the red for the second consecutive month.

Merchandise Trade Deficit	
November	$14.52 billion
October	$13.82 billion
Year through November '94	$139.79 billion
Year through November '93	$107.79 billion
Durable Goods Orders	
December	+1.4 percent
1994	+13.9 percent
Gross Domestic Product	
Fourth quarter	+4.5 percent
1994	+4.0 percent
Leading Indicators	
December	+0.1 percent
November	+0.3 percent

AFL-CIO NEWSGRAFIC

Workers' share elusive

The numbers say that the economy is roaring ahead. But workers are seeing little sign of that in their paychecks.

The real Gross Domestic Product climbed 4.5 percent in the fourth quarter, bringing the figure for the year to 4 percent, the best performance in a decade.

Nonetheless, employment costs — combining wages, salaries and benefits — rose a scant 3 percent last year, well short of the growth in the GDP and down from the 3.5 percent gains recorded in 1992 and 1993.

Non-residential investment, led by durable equipment, jumped in the fourth quarter by an annual rate of 17.6 percent, seeming to contradict Republican arguments that a capital gains tax cut is needed to spur economic growth.

However, continued interest rate increases by the Federal Reserve Board are showing signs of choking off the economic recovery, with residential investment down two quarters in a row.

Further, the Index of Leading Indicators, which forecasts future economic activity, slipped to a 0.1 percent increase, as consumers battered by rising interest rates held back from buying cars and other major purchases.

Fed wants to jiggle numbers

Changing inflation yardstick could reduce benefits

By David Kameras

Federal Reserve Board Chairman Alan Greenspan doesn't like the measurement, so he wants to change the yardstick. It's a peculiar prescription for attacking the federal budget deficit, said Rudy Oswald, chief economist of the AFL-CIO.

Greenspan proposed changes in the way the Bureau of Labor Statistics calculates the Consumer Price Index, which is used as a basis for adjusting federal programs like Social Security and veterans' pensions, as well as tax brackets, exemptions and deductions and worker cost-of-living increases.

A reduction of one point in the official inflation rate would bring the deficit down by some $55 billion for the year 2000.

"But the savings don't come out of thin air," Oswald said. "Greenspan's own calculations show that $28 billion would come from reduced payments to recipients of Social Security and other benefit programs, while $21 billion would come from increased personal taxes.

"While Greenspan argues that inflation is overstated for budget purposes, he then combats the mythical inflation by masterminding seven interest rate increases over the past year," Oswald added. "If the present 2.7 percent inflation rate is enough to scare the Fed into raising its lending rate more than 50 percent, why does the Fed chairman pooh-pooh the inflation rate when it comes to the interests of ordinary Americans?"

> *"What on earth are Alan Greenspan and his buddies at the Fed doing raising interest rates?"*
>
> **— Sen. Byron L. Dorgan (D-N.D.)**

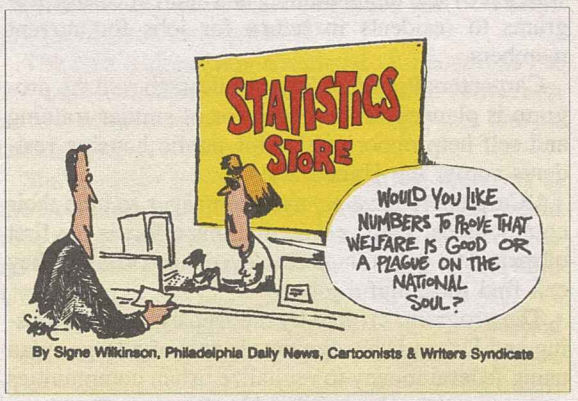
The CPI is an in-depth survey of what people actually spend on food, housing, clothing, transportation, medical care and entertainment. Some have charged that the index doesn't allow for "substitutions" consumers make when prices increase on their preferred goods and services.

"It's true that when steak prices rise, more people buy hamburger instead, and their grocery bills remain unchanged," Oswald said. "But in this case, should the government's official index reflect that these people suffered no ill effects from rising prices? That's how Chairman Greenspan would have it."

Greenspan is not alone. House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) has proposed cutting off funding to the BLS "if they can't get it right in the next 30 days or so."

Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich warned that interfering "politically in the technical work" of the BLS would jeopardize the "sanctity and integrity" of the agency's mission.

Testifying Jan. 18 before the House Appropriations subcommittee on labor, health and human services and education, Reich said that while the BLS is making the "complicated technical judgments" needed to make certain corrections to the CPI, the study of price measurement will take a long time.



By Signe Wilkinson, Philadelphia Daily News, Cartoonists & Writers Syndicate

His desire to keep objective data from being politicized has been echoed by Democrats on Capitol Hill, who object to Gingrich's recent attacks on the agency.

Sen. Byron L. Dorgan (D-N.D.) has moved to introduce a sense-of-the-Senate resolution declaring that changes to the statistical methodology should "result from thoughtful study and analysis," not from "pressure exerted by politicians."

"We find a major political figure in this town trying to doctor the numbers and cook the books," added Sen. Christopher J. Dodd (D-Conn.) in assailing Gingrich's plan. Congress should proceed "cautiously and conservatively" in its attempts to balance the budget, he said.

"Attempts by members of Congress for rapid alteration of the Consumer Price Index are unwise, and smack of political interference in the collection and dissemination of economic data," said Maurine Haver, president of the National Association of Business Economists.

"What on earth are Alan Greenspan and his buddies at the Fed doing raising interest rates seven times if they think the real rate of inflation is only 1.2 percent to 1.7 percent?" Dorgan asked.

Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) called the paradox "outrageously hypocritical and raises serious questions about the logic of the Federal Reserve."

"I think millions of American families who have had their mortgages and credit card interest increased over the past year deserve an explanation," he said.

"It remains to be seen whether the speaker and the Fed chairman will succeed in their effort to force BLS to cook the books," Oswald said. "But no matter how it all turns out, you can be sure that the 'steak-or-hamburger' choice is one they will never have to confront."

Trade in 1994 likely was worst ever

November imports were at record levels for the seventh month in a row, setting the stage for an expected overall annual trade deficit that will top the previous record of $152.1 billion, which was set in 1987.

The U.S. merchandise trade deficit for the month widened to $14.5 billion as the overall trade deficit, which includes services, was at $10.5 billion.

While the imbalance in merchandise trade with Japan improved somewhat, from $6.7 billion in October to $6.2 billion in November, that was partly offset by the gap with Western Europe, which jumped from $1.5 billion to $2 billion.

The goods deficit with China also narrowed, from $3.5 billion to $2.9 billion. The deficit with Singapore doubled from $0.2 billion to $0.4 billion.

Meanwhile, Mexico, whose economy recently has been crushed by a radically devalued peso, sold $378 million more in goods to the United States than it purchased last November, producing a fourfold increase in the goods deficit, from $89 million in October.

Trade with Mexico, which was supposed to create American jobs since the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement a year ago, used to be measured by surpluses. Now, it's drawn in red ink.

AFL-CIO economist Greg Woodhead predicted that yet-to-be-released figures for December will show that the bilateral deficit will worsen further.

"The peso devaluation means that the price of U.S.-made products will rise and therefore slow down U.S. exports to Mexico, eliminating thousands of jobs in U.S. export industries," he said. "At the same time, since goods made in Mexico are now cheaper in dollars, imports from Mexico will increase."

The merchandise trade gap with Canada, the other NAFTA partner, also worsened, from $1.7 billion to $2 billion.

For the first 11 months of the year, the goods deficit soared to $141.2 billion, compared with $106.3 billion over the same period the year before.

Increased imports, totaling $59.8 billion, were recorded in industrial supplies and materials, automotive vehicles, parts and engines, capital goods and consumer goods.

Exports also increased to $45.3 billion, led by capital goods, industrial supplies and materials, consumer goods and food, feeds and beverages.

— David Kameras

JOB SAFETY

IAQ rule changes urged

The AFL-CIO recently offered its support for a new Occupational Safety and Health Administration standard on indoor air quality, but qualified it with a series of suggested modifications.

In testimony before the agency in January, the federation urged an emphasis on the compliance program; the addition of "sick building syndrome" and complaints of poor air quality as trigger mechanisms for the standard; a remediation/response timetable; medical management/removal protection; and an exemption process for small commercial workplaces.

Workplace violence studied

Workplace violence guidelines expected from OSHA this year would target night retail and health care sectors — two areas where workers experience the majority of violent incidents.

The agency guidelines would not carry enforcement authority. Citations would continue to be issued under OSHA's general duty clause.

Respiratory update sought

OSHA has proposed changes in the 24-year-old respirator protection standard to correct inadequacies found by its inspectors.

Under the proposed rule, employers must develop a written program for respirator use, establish procedures for selecting respirators, provide medical evaluations for employees who use respirators, make sure the respirators fit properly, set use and maintenance procedures, train employees and evaluate the effectiveness of their respirator programs.

New lead fine levied

A Pennsylvania painting company faces $2.4 million in proposed penalties for failing to protect employees against both falls and lead exposures.

The Manganas Painting Co. of Canonsburg, Pa., was cited after an OSHA inspection of an Ohio bridge-painting project resulted in 18 alleged willful and nine alleged serious violations.

OSHA issued proposed penalties of $1.3 million against the company in early 1994 for violations found on the same painting project over the Little Miami River near Lebanon, Ohio.

OSHA: Sorry, Charlie

Star-Kist Samoa Inc. has agreed to pay $1.8 million to settle OSHA claims.

The agency cited the tuna company subsidiary for violations of numerous regulations, including those covering occupational hearing conservation, lockout/tagout procedures, confined-space entry standards and the proper protection of machinery and workers.

Farm worker rule in effect

The Worker Protection Standard designed to protect nearly 3.5 million agricultural workers from exposure to harmful pesticides took full effect Jan. 1. It requires steps to curtail workers' exposure to pesticides and give workers the information they need to protect themselves.

However, the Environmental Protection Agency has issued five proposed revisions to reduce some restrictions and shorten the grace period for training and retraining.



Isaiah Callahan

Clothing and Textile Workers President Jack Sheinkman, center, and Machinists President George Kourpias were honored for their outstanding service to the cause of equal rights during the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Social Responsibility Awards Breakfast. Shown with Sheinkman are King's widow, Coretta Scott King, left, and King's sister, Christine King Farris.

NEWSMAKERS

President Clinton will appoint Service Employees President **John J. Sweeney** to the National Commission for Employment Policy. Sweeney is the second union president appointed to the advisory panel in recent months. Communications Workers President **Morton Bahr** was appointed to the commission in November.

Labor Department Chief of Staff **Kathryn O'Leary "Kitty" Higgins** will move over to the White House to serve as secretary to the president's Cabinet. Higgins replaces **Christine Varney,** now a member of the Federal Trade Commission.

AFSCME Council 36 Executive Director **John Wyrough** was appointed to the advisory panel to the Senate Special Committee on Local Government Investments, which is examining the events leading to the Orange County, Calif., bankruptcy crisis.

DEATHS

Henry Kraus, who served as the first editor of the UAW's national newspaper and who went on to become a prolific author, died in Paris from cancer. He was 89.

Kraus began his labor journalism career in Cleveland as a publicist for a UAW local. His effort led to the founding of the United Auto Worker newspaper. Kraus' union work was the subject of his first and last books, and he wrote five other books on medieval art, a topic he became interested in after moving to Paris in the mid-1950s. He is survived by his wife and a niece.

CORRECTIONS

The Orange County Employees Association is an unaffiliated union that represents some 11,000 workers in Orange County, Calif., and is not affiliated with AFSCME, as was reported Jan. 9. AFSCME District Council 36 represents about 1,500 public employees in Orange County.

The report on Congress Jan. 23 incorrectly listed Rep. Paul B. Henry (R) from the 3rd District of Michigan. Henry has been replaced by Rep. Vernon J. Ehlers (R), who was 0 for 9 on labor issues.

The Distillery Workers will be in convention in 1996, not this year as reported in the Jan. 9 issue of the AFL-CIO News. Not listed in the Convention Calendar was the North Carolina AFL-CIO, which will convene in Asheville, N.C., Sept. 26-29. The updated calendar will be published again in June.

— Compiled by Muriel H. Cooper

RESOURCES

International Labor Communications Association member publications are invited to enter the 1995 **Journalism Awards** contest for publications issued in 1994. Entries are accepted from regular periodical and non-periodical special publications. Entry forms are available from the ILCA, 815 16th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006. Entry deadline is March 31.

The AFL-CIO Education Department and the University and College Labor Education Association will sponsor four regional **summer schools for union women.** They are the Western Women's Institute, June 3-7, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, British Columbia (contact Kate Braid at 604/291-4177); Southern School for Union Women, July 22-27, Cliffside Inn, Harpers Ferry, W.Va. (contact Joanne Spano at 304/876-6353); Northeast Women's School, July 23-28, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pa. (contact Freida Rozen at 814/865-5425); Midwest School for Women Workers, July 30-Aug. 4, University of Wisconsin School for Workers, Madison, Wis. (contact Katherine Sciacchitano at 608/262-2111).

PUBLICATIONS

Assault on Workers' Rights is a 64-page report by the AFL-CIO Industrial Union Department. Copies are $2 each for up to 100, $1 each for more than 100 and $10 each for non-union members. Send orders to the IUD, 815 16th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

Changing Work: A Union Guide to Workplace Change is a comprehensive guide to new work systems for trade unionists. Copies are $5 each for one to nine copies and $4 each for 10 or more copies. Send orders to the AFL-CIO Human Resources Development Institute, 815 16th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

ILWU agreement clears way for longshore work in Alaska

By David Kameras

The Longshoremen and Warehousemen have preserved jobs in Alaska and defused a potential international conflict.

Under the agreement, the U.S. Labor Department has cleared the way for fishing carriers to continue operations in the 49th state by allowing the use of foreign crew members to perform longshore work only after they try to put U.S. workers into the jobs.

The move bypasses some of the usual regulatory delays because otherwise, the Labor Department said, "employers may be encouraged by economic exigencies to utilize foreign crew members in longshore work illegally, or to re-flag their vessels to qualify for the reciprocity exception for vessels under the flags of countries which permit U.S. crew members to perform longshore work."

Sometimes a fishing season doesn't permit reliance on a single source of labor for handling what is a highly perishable commodity. In 1992, for example, the herring roe season was announced one day in advance and lasted all of 20 minutes, during which 400,000 tons of herring were harvested.

The rule represents the latest development stemming from an agreement reached in 1992 between the ILWU and five Japanese tramper companies intended to address a loophole in a 1990 immigration law that allowed foreign crews to work in ports where they have a history of work and where union representation is less than 30 percent. The union's agreement countered by giving hiring preference to U.S. workers.

"We're extremely pleased that, after almost three years, our agreement will become law," said ILWU President Brian McWilliams. "It wouldn't have happened if everybody affected by it hadn't owned a piece of it."

"What made our negotiations unique wasn't the players or necessarily the issues, but the way we came to agreement," he said. "Each side got a shot at finding acceptable solutions for the others' particular problems — walking a mile in one another's shoes, so to speak. In the end, we walked away with a deal that truly belonged to all of us."

In addition to certifying that bona fide efforts are made to use U.S. longshore workers, the new rule means employers must indicate that their use of foreign workers is not intended to influence representation elections for Alaska workers.

"We came up with a joint solution to a local problem that had far-reaching consequences," McWilliams said.



Laborers Photo

Sanderson Farms poultry workers celebrate after Laborers' representation victory in Hazlehurst, Miss.

Laborers score Mississippi win

Poultry campaign adds 500 new members

By Muriel H. Cooper

The Laborers continued their string of impressive organizing victories by adding 500 poultry workers at Sanderson Farms in Hazlehurst, Miss.

The 223-195 vote for LIUNA by the poultry processing plant workers in Hazlehurst comes on the heels of the July 1994 enlistment of 1,000 workers at the Sanderson plant in Collins, Miss.

The predominantly African-American workers in Hazlehurst contacted LIUNA after being subjected to what they called unfair working conditions and unreasonable treatment by plant supervisors. Many workers also voiced strong concern about the company's high cost for health insurance, an inequitable sick-leave policy and unfair compensation based on the company's rising profits.

"Most of all, we needed fair treatment," said Darlene Coleman, a worker in the deboning department.

In return, the company "carried out an eight-week term of terror" against the workers, said LIUNA lead organizer Marc Panepinto. They held "hostage" meetings with the workers and brought in African-American supervisors to discourage the organizing attempt.

"However, the people had grounding," said Panepinto. "Some of the workers knew retired union families that had moved back to the area."

Their victory was credited to family support, with a big boost from a visit by the Rev. Jesse Jackson, who encouraged the workers to join LIUNA.

"This is just the first of many sweet victories that Sanderson workers will experience," said LIUNA President Arthur A. Coia. "We will work diligently on behalf of the workers and look forward to negotiating a great contract."

Coia described Panepinto, a graduate of the AFL-CIO's Organizing Institute, as a key player in both of the Sanderson victories. "He's got a gift that no one can learn in school or from years of practice. People like him, people trust him and people believe in him," he said.

The union also recently chalked up victories in Albuquerque, N.M., with nearly 120 administrative employees of the Indian Health Service Headquarters West, and in Hamilton, Ontario, where 180 janitorial and 170 maintenance workers at the Hamilton-Wentworth Separate School Board joined Local 837.

ORGANIZING

IBT on roll at Overnite

Workers at Overnite Transportation Co. in Minneapolis became the fourth group of Overnite workers in the past two months to vote for Teamsters representation in National Labor Relations Board elections.

Overnite workers across the country have mobilized to win IBT representation at the nation's largest non-union LTL (less than truckload) carrier. The next scheduled votes will be in Bensalem, Pa. and St. Louis.

Kansas City, Sacramento and Indianapolis Overnite workers recently won representation. Also filing election petitions are workers in Detroit and Grand Rapids, Mich., Milwaukee and Appleton, Wis., Louisville, Lexington and London, Ky., Charleston and Parkersburg, W.Va., South Bend, Ind., and Pennsauken, N.J.

"We were able to speak with workers from the Midwest, East Coast and the South who are organizing — and that coordination made all the difference because we knew we weren't alone at Overnite in seeking a voice on the job and security for our families," said Rich Person, an Overnite dock-worker in Sacramento, Calif.

IATSE gains foothold

Unions got "a foot in the door" in the non-union casino resort of Laughlin, Nev., as five stage-crew workers at the Flamingo Hilton are now represented by the Theatrical Stage Employees Local 720.

The workers began organizing two years ago. "The men were incredibly motivated and determined to change wages and working conditions that they saw as an insult," said IATSE organizer Moshe Bialac.

They gained a first contract, for three years, that includes a 3 percent wage increase per year, full major medical coverage, a pension plan, grievance procedure and a training trust.

Prison guards go USWA

Workers at the Pierre, S.D., Department of Corrections voted 169 to 79 to be represented by the Steelworkers.

The 335 workers at the facility are corrections officers, inmate counselors, food services and maintenance personnel.

Negotiations for a new contract will focus on safety on the job, scheduling, promotions, wages and medical benefits and will cover corrections officers, inmate counselors, food services and maintenance personnel, the USWA said.

UAW gains 770 in Indiana

Some 770 employees at Fairfield Manufacturing Co. in Lafayette, Ind., will be represented by the UAW following an NLRB election. Voting in an Oct. 6 election, production and maintenance employees cast 435 ballots for the union and 300 against; eight ballots were challenged.

The company manufactures gears for heavy-duty equipment.

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FEBRUARY 20, 1995



Bridgestone shows how to turn cooperation into confrontation. **See Page 8.**



David Kameras/AFL-CIO News

TV maker pulls plug on U.S.

Workers adjust as jobs go down drain to Mexico

By David Kameras
Springfield, Mo.

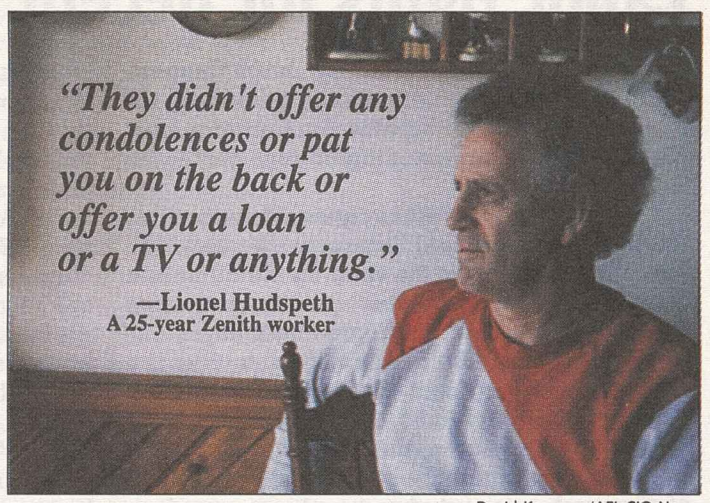
There is a face behind every job that heads out of this country, and a community that suffers. Today, there are a lot of unhappy faces in this suffering town.

On Feb. 24, the Zenith television plant that once employed more than 4,000 workers will have closed its doors forever. Already, the building's been sold to a sporting goods distributor, and the constant rumble of semi-trailers on Kearney Street announces the migration of equipment and materials as part of the final shift of production to Mexico.

Fewer than 30 workers will remain to finish cleaning up the plant. What once was a bustling American production facility now resembles a vast indoor parking garage.

People who spent most of their working lives at Zenith now have to start all over. Leroy Millican, for example, lost his maintenance job Feb. 6 after working for Zenith for more than 23 years.

''When I first started I was 18 years old, and there were a lot of guys with five-year pins, and I said, 'I'll never be here that long.' Then I got the five-year pin, and the 10-year pin, and I got to thinking, 'I'll get to retire from this place.' But it didn't happen,'' he said.



David Kameras/AFL-CIO News

Now Millican is looking forward to furthering his training, even though he already has spent four years in trade school. He hopes some day to earn wages comparable to what he got at Zenith.

''But as time goes on, I may be lowering my standards. It depends on what's available,'' he said.

Diminished prospects

A new plastics manufacturing plant opening on the edge of town may be a source of jobs. But in addi-

Continued on Page 6

Unions fighting backdoor attack on worker rights

Measure to amend NLRA sanctions sham unions

By James B. Parks

Worker efforts are under way to persuade Congress to reject the latest attempt to sanction company-dominated employee committees as a way for management to circumvent the law permitting workers to form organizations they choose and control.

Members of Congress are being urged to reject the Teamwork for Employees and Managers Act of 1995 — the so-called TEAM Act — which is part of the business community's thinly veiled assault on worker rights.

The bill, introduced by Sen. Nancy L. Kassebaum (R-Kan.) and Rep. Steve Gunderson (R-Wis.), would lift the 60-year-old ban on certain types of company-sponsored employee committees by amending Section 8(a)(2) of the National Labor Relations Act.

''Under this bill, employers could pick employee representatives, call a meeting and discuss anything, including wages and benefits,'' said David Silberman, director of the AFL-CIO task force on labor law. ''The only thing they could not do is enter into a legally binding contract with the workers, which they would prefer not to do, anyway.''

The House Economic and Educational Opportunities subcommittee on employer-employee relations has scheduled a Feb. 23 markup of the bill, H.R. 743. The Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, which Kassebaum chairs, has not yet set a markup date for its version, S.295.

The National Labor Relations Board's 1992 ruling in the Electromation case has been cited repeatedly by employers as the reason to change the law to allow employer-dominated employee committees. But two Electromation workers, both members of Teamsters Local 364 in Elkhart, Ind., told congressional committees that the employee committees were used illegally to thwart a union organizing campaign — the same conclusion reached by the Reagan-Bush appointees to the NLRB.

''Management set up employee action committees because it looked like we were going to have our own organization, and they didn't want that,'' said Berna Price, an Electromation employee for 16 years. ''They picked the people who could be on the committees — and they set the agenda for what the committees would talk about. That's like saying you can

Continued on Page 4

Union membership growth continues for second straight year

Union membership grew by 150,000 in 1994, the second consecutive year of growth after 14 years of decline, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported. Membership in 1993 rose by 240,000.

Of the 16.7 million union members, approximately 13.3 million are represented by AFL-CIO unions. The latest figures show significant growth in public-sector unionization, as well as increasing numbers of professional and white-collar employees who are choosing to join unions, the AFL-CIO pointed out.

''Where the jobs are growing, unions are growing,'' said AFL-CIO Organizing Director Joe Shantz. ''The most significant gains occurred in the service sector, which has been growing as other sectors have declined in recent decades.''

For example, manufacturing, construction and mining accounted for 34.6 percent of all employment in 1969. Today, only 20.8 percent of all workers are in those traditionally unionized fields. Among the fastest-growing fields is home health care, in which some 30,000 workers signed up with unions in 1994, part of the 100,000 added in the service sector.

BLS cautioned that the 1994 numbers ''are not directly comparable'' with earlier reports because of a statistical adjustment in January 1994 to incorporate more working women into the total work force. With nearly 108 million counted in the work force, BLS counted 15.5 percent as members of unions (compared with 15.8 percent in 1993) — 10.9 percent in the private sector (down from 11.2 percent) and 38.7 percent in the public sector (up from 37.7 percent).

Even with the work force adjusted upward, government employment declined by 279,000 in 1994. Unionization, however, increased by 76,000.

Union members continued to earn considerably more (37 percent) than non-union workers. The union advantage, BLS said, reflected not only the influence of collective bargaining, but also variations by occupation, industry, company size and region.

ORGANIZING

ACTWU gains in Midwest

The holidays in the Midwest were good to the Clothing and Textile Workers, as the union racked up victories at manufacturing facilities in Dover, Ohio, and Indianapolis.

A Dec. 30 election at Flex Industries in Dover resulted in 120 workers voting for the union and 77 against, with nine ballots challenged. The workers manufacture plastic pipes for cars.

ACTWU also will represent 256 production and maintenance employees of Autoliv North America Inc. in Indianapolis after a 158-77 vote Dec. 21. Twenty-four ballots were challenged. The company produces seat belts and airbags.

RWDSU scores in Alabama

The Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union has scored three recent organizing victories in Alabama, including enlisting 600 new members at the Southland/Wayne Poultry processing plant in Enterprise.

The union gained another 100 members in representation elections at Gadsden Tool and at Kentucky Farms in Gadsden.

The Southland workers had sought representation because of intimidation, favoritism, firings and health and safety issues at the plant.

At Gadsden Tool, a machine shop that makes tools and repairs machines, the vote count was 39 to 36 for the union, with the company challenging three votes. The Kentucky Farms workers, who make and package biscuits and sausages, voted 18-3 for the union.

IBT in police corner

After voting overwhelmingly to be represented by the Teamsters, police in Daytona Beach, Fla., urged immediate contract negotiations. The Jan. 28 vote was 158 for the IBT, 43 for no union and eight for the unaffiliated Fraternal Order of Police.

The officers are seeking a contract that would end favoritism, provide for base promotions and procedures for transfers to better jobs, as well as standard, written personnel policies.

Cheerleaders seek union

The National Labor Relations Board has ruled in favor of a tentative February representation election for the Buffalo Jills, cheerleaders for the Buffalo Bills of the National Football League.

Tired of paying their own way for the Bills' last four Super Bowl appearances, enduring skimpy uniforms in winter weather and being treated as "independent contractors," the Jills filed a petition with the NLRB seeking to create the first union among NFL cheerleaders.

The women see the move as a way to raise the level of professionalism among NFL cheerleaders.

N.H. labor sinks 'right to work'

Other states brace for attacks on union security

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

For the second time this year, workers and their unions beat back so-called "right-to-work" legislation — this time in New Hampshire.

But battles are just heating up in other states as right-wing elements try to take advantage of political shifts since the 1994 election.

The New Hampshire bill, defeated 13-9 in a state Senate committee, follows on the heels of a similar victory in Montana. In both cases, labor and its community allies were able to overcome deceptive rhetoric and free-spending by proponents of the measures.

New Hampshire AFL-CIO President Mark MacKenzie hailed the vote as a victory for facts over rhetoric, saying it was "a triumph for the freedom of management and labor to bargain a contract without government interference."

Montana, Arkansas save Davis-Bacon
See Page 11

The measure would have made New Hampshire the nation's 22nd state banning union security clauses in private-sector collective bargaining contracts. Union security clauses require everyone who benefits from a union contract to pay a fair share for the cost of the contract.

During the New Hampshire debate, several senators took issue with the lobbying tactics of the Virginia-based National Right-to-Work Committee. "I've been hearing from New Hampshire residents who are told to call me by the committee in Virginia," said Sen. David Currier.

"When I question them, most of these people don't even know what issue they're calling about," he said. "It's deplorable that an out-of-state group thinks it can lead the people of New Hampshire around like that."

Sen. John King pointed to New Hampshire's lower-than-the-national-average unemployment and poverty rates and added, "I think New Hampshire is doing really well. Why mess things up?"

Meanwhile, trade unionists in Oklahoma are delivering postcards to the state Capitol and beginning a statewide letter-writing campaign.

"With six right-to-work bills in the legislature and a governor advocating them, we have a real fight on our hands," said Ross Williams, president of the Oklahoma AFL-CIO. The campaign will focus on education and grass-roots outreach.

In New Mexico, right-to-work legislation in the Senate still is pending. A House bill was tabled in committee by a 4-1 vote.

During testimony before a state Senate committee, New Mexico AFL-CIO President George E. Gilliland pointed to the numerous problems of so-called "right-to-work" states, including low wages, poor education, less health insurance and higher-than-average poverty rates.

"What is good for Virginia is not good for New Mexico," Gilliland told the committee. "Virginia may enjoy labor strife, but New Mexico doesn't need it and damn sure doesn't want it."

Colorado's bill is awaiting a vote in the Senate, but the governor, Roy Roemer, opposes it. The proposal also is in the wrong committee — State Affairs — but it probably will be referred to the Business Affairs and Labor Committee, said Robert Greene, president of the Colorado AFL-CIO.

Oregon's proposal is aimed at public employees only and, like Oklahoma, is likely to be a long, drawn-out fight. Officials in both states have vowed to either fight the battle in the legislature or through ballot initiatives.

Right-to-work proposals are under consideration in Maryland and Rhode Island as well, but unions find less threatening political climates in these states after the 1994 elections. Kansas, which long ago banned union security clauses, has another proposal aimed at weakening worker organizations even more: requiring annual renewal of dues checkoff authorizations.

In addition, state legislatures in Idaho and Michigan are considering right-to-work laws for public employees.

Labor fights for decent minimum wage

By David Kameras

As President Clinton's proposal to increase the minimum wage was introduced in Congress, labor vowed to take the case for a higher wage floor to the American public.

The union effort includes a nationwide grass-roots campaign by the Food and Commercial Workers, who are offering to provide the voice for the 30 million non-union workers and their families who could benefit from the boost in the minimum wage.

"The declining value of the minimum wage is a drag on the wages of millions of workers," UFCW President Doug Dority said. "If the wage floor keeps sinking, average wages will keep falling."

Clinton's proposal, for two annual increases of 45 cents each, raising the benchmark wage rate from the current $4.25 to $5.15 an hour, was introduced Feb. 14 by the Democratic leaders in both chambers, Rep. Richard A. Gephardt (Mo.) and Sen. Thomas A. Daschle (S.D.). Two increases of 45 cents each is the same as the last improvement, which came under President Bush.

"I believe if we really honor work, anyone who takes responsibility to work full time should be able to support a family in dignity," Clinton said, warning that, "in terms of buying power, the minimum wage will be at a 40-year low next year if we do not raise it above $4.25 an hour."

The AFL-CIO commended Clinton for his initiative. "For the longer term, we believe the minimum wage must be raised to at least 50 percent of the average hourly wage — the historic basis for determining the minimum wage — and be maintained at that level," said President Lane Kirkland. "In current terms, that would require an increase to $5.75 an hour.

"That's what the 4 million working Americans who now earn the minimum wage need and deserve," Kirkland said, calling Clinton's proposal "an important step toward that goal."

Despite past bipartisan support for the minimum wage, the White House initially was unable to muster any Republican support for the proposal.

Although the GOP leadership has promised hearings, key legislators are opposed to an increase, and

Continued on Page 3

AFL-CIO NEWS

Director of Information: Rex Hardesty

Editor: Michael Byrne

Assistant Editors: Candice Johnson, David Kameras, James B. Parks

Staff Writers: Muriel H. Cooper, Mike Hall, Colleen M. O'Neill, Sharolyn A. Rosier

Graphics/layout: Stan Hitt

AFL-CIO Headquarters: 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006
Telephone: (202) 637-5010
CompuServe: 76004,3601

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Davis-Bacon Act under siege

GOP leaders seek repeal of prevailing wage laws

By Mike Hall

The quality of life and the quality of workmanship would decline if Republicans are successful in repealing the Davis-Bacon and Service Contract Acts, Congress was told by representatives of workers, industry and government.

In addition, they said, injury rates would rise and job opportunities for minority and female workers would shrink.

"The repeal of this legislation would have far-reaching and disastrous consequences for workers, the industry and the federal government," Robert A. Georgine, president of the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department, told the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee.

Committee Chairman Nancy L. Kassebaum (R-Kan.) is the author of S. 141, a bill calling for repeal of the prevailing wage law for federal or federally funded construction projects.

The Clinton administration told Congress that it "is opposed to repeal of these laws and committed to retaining the protections they afford working people employed on federal construction and service contracts."

Proponents of the repeal charge that workers on prevailing wage projects are grossly overpaid, costing the government billions of dollars a year. But as Georgine pointed out, the average construction worker makes about $578 a week, which amounts to $30,058 a year, assuming he or she is lucky enough to actually work 50 weeks a year.

He told the committee that construction workers, union and non-union alike, would see their paychecks cut by at least 5 percent a year, or $1,500 a year, if Davis-Bacon were repealed.

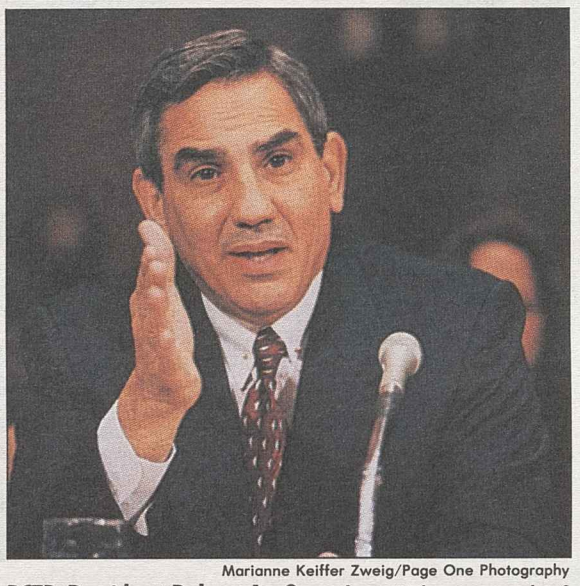
"The construction workers covered by the law are middle-class Americans from large and small communities who would be hurt by bidding down the wages of federal construction jobs," Carpenters President Sig Lucassen told the House Workforce Protection Subcommittee.

Georgine also noted that Davis-Bacon repeal would cause federal tax collection to fall by $1 billion per year because of the decline in construction earnings, actually adding to the federal deficit.

Both proponents and opponents of repeal do agree it would drive down wages. But that does not translate into lower costs for the government, a large contractors group said.

Repeal would "only serve to drive down wages (and with it quality and productivity of workers) but would not decrease costs. Our contractors who bid on prevailing wage construction projects know that productivity is the major factor in determining labor costs, and not hourly wage rates," said Terry G. Bumpers of the Contractors Coalition for Davis-Bacon, which represents more than 14,000 contractors.

A study of 14 years of data from the Federal Highway Administration backs up the claim that low wages do not translate into lower costs. Twenty-six states were divided into two groups: higher-wage states, where highway construction workers were paid an average of $17.65, and lower-wage states, where the pay rate was $9.76.



Marianne Keiffer Zweig/Page One Photography

BCTD President Robert A. Georgine: "The repeal of this legislation would have far-reaching and disastrous consequences for workers, the industry and the federal government."

"The result was illuminating. The higher-wage states built a mile of highway for 18 percent less than lower-wage states," or a quarter of million dollars more per mile in low-wage states, Georgine said.

"If Davis-Bacon is repealed, some contractors might reap savings on labor costs, but the taxpayer will see no relief on overall construction costs," Georgine said.

Some critics of Davis-Bacon claim it has a discriminatory impact on minority and/or women workers, and that lowering wages would open the door of opportunity for these workers.

A study of nine states that repealed their "little Davis-Bacon laws" showed no increase in minority hiring and actually a major decrease in minority enrollment in apprenticeship programs. But after repeal of the state wage laws, minority participation dropped from 20 percent to 12.5 percent.

That same study also showed a 15 percent increase in serious injuries after those states repealed their wage laws, and the number of lost work days jumped by 12 percent.

The House committee also was debating the repeal of the Service Contract Act, which requires prevailing wages for service workers such as maintenance, security guards and food service workers under contract in federal facilities.

Backers of SCA repeal are "determined to make low-income working people suffer a further decline in their standard of living," said SEIU President John J. Sweeney. "Where is the overpaid SCA janitor, security guard or food service worker?" he asked.

Sweeney pointed out that the wages most SCA workers receive are modest to begin with. Unless unionized, which few SCA workers are, most have no health insurance, he said.

While their wages are low, the SCA has made it possible for these workers "to support their families without government assistance and to be full economic partners in their communities," Sweeney said.

CAPITOL DIGEST

Republican lawmakers refused, for the second time in less than a month, to protect Social Security from possible raids if a balanced budget constitutional amendment is approved. By a 57-41 vote, the Senate Feb. 14 turned down an amendment that would have put Social Security off limits, following similar House action in late January.

The Senate also followed the lead of House Republicans when it defeated, 56-44, an amendment that would have required a detailed plan of the more than $1 trillion in budget cuts needed to balance the budget.

Sen. Jay Rockefeller (D-W.V.) warned that if the Social Security amendment failed, "it will be the equivalent of posting a danger sign in front of every household that counts on Social Security."

Earlier, the Senate approved a non-binding resolution saying that the budget should not be balanced at the expense of Social Security. But Sen. Harry Reid (D-Nev.), author of the failed amendment, called the unenforceable resolution "little more than a fig leaf."

The proposed constitutional amendment calls for a balanced budget by 2002. Estimates show it will require spending cuts between $1.3 and $1.6 trillion to balance the budget.

A balanced budget amendment would "do much to harm the national economy, the budgets of the states and the pocketbooks of America's working families. The consequences of S.J. Res. 1 have not been fully explained to the American people, and it cannot be thoughtfully considered until they are," AFL-CIO Legislative Director Robert M. McGlotten said in a letter to the Senate.

The final outcome in the Senate is not certain. A two-thirds majority is needed to pass a constitutional amendment, and 38 states must then ratify it. Both sides agree that the issue could come down to a single vote in the Senate, which is expected to act on it before the end of February.

Also on Capitol Hill:

1996 BUDGET — President Clinton submitted his $1.61 trillion fiscal year 1996 budget to Congress Feb. 8. But unlike his previous two budgets, the fate of FY 1996 spending levels largely will be in the hands of the Republican majorities in the House and Senate. Major changes in spending and budget cuts are expected.

Some areas of interest to labor in the Clinton budget include:

- A 50 percent reduction in pay raises due federal workers under the law, a proposal criticized by Government Employees President John N. Sturdivant. "AFGE does not believe that reinventing government means dismantling government while cheating dedicated employees who serve the public," he said.
- Hundreds of programs rolled into block grants with funds going directly to states, including 70 Labor Department job-training programs. A recent study by the Service Employees showed previous block grants have resulted in deep spending cuts.
- A 10 percent increase earmarked for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, as well as a 5 percent increase planned for the Mine Safety and Health Administration.

Reich, economists debunk minimum wage job-loss claim

Continued from Page 2

House Majority Leader Richard K. Armey (R-Texas) says he wants the minimum wage eliminated altogether.

Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich called the notion that minimum wage increases cause job loss "absurd," saying "the theory is at odds with the evidence." He pointed to surveys by economists Alan Krueger and Lawrence Katz that show employment gains in low-wage establishments after increases in the minimum wage.

"Minimum wage firms have high turnover, which is costly," Reich said. "So if you raise wages you actually reduce vacancy and you reduce turnover." And besides, "you can't raise a family these days on $8,500 a year," he said.

Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.), who has introduced legislation to raise the wage floor to $5.75 over three years, said the support of the American people is key.

A raise in the minimum wage, he said, would say to working people that "we believe their work is important, their families are important and their interests are important." A wage increase would make "an important difference to many Americans who went to the polls last November to vent their frustrations," he said.

The UFCW said it will target major low-wage-paying employers who are opposing the minimum wage increase. The campaign will include distributing handbills to employees at non-union worksites with a hotline number to call for information on how to contact members of Congress.

"The low-paying corporate giants will spend millions on high-priced lobbyists to deny pennies to their own low-wage workers," Dority said. "From nursing homes to poultry plants to discount retail stores, the UFCW will give a voice to the workers whose voices are never heard and whose faces are never seen on Capitol Hill."

Besides the UFCW campaign, other unions are pressing for the minimum wage increase through a variety of community coalitions. In one such effort, AFSCME, the Service Employees and SEIU's 9to5 are trying to correct misperceptions about who gets the minimum wage.

The vast majority, 86 percent, of all minimum wage workers are adults over 18 years old. Women comprise 59 percent of minimum wage workers, but are only 46 percent of the employed work force.

Although 69 percent of the new entries in the labor market have been women, many of their jobs have been low-wage, part-time and/or temporary, 9to5 pointed out.

Workers shun TEAMing up in sham unions

Continued from Page 1

go into a grocery store, but the clerk is going to pick out what you buy.''

''Our company could have cooperated with us by accepting the fact that we wanted a union — our own representatives that we elected,'' said Diane Verrette, who worked at Electromation for more than seven years. ''But when the same women who they had put on the action committees sat across the table as union representatives, management no longer wanted to cooperate with them.

''Participation was fine as long as we women knew our place. But when we wanted our own voice — not something controlled by management — then we were treated like we were out of line,'' she said.

''If you complained about something like a machine needing a guard on it, they just didn't invite you to the meetings anymore. The committees were a way for the company to pretend to be on the side of the workers while making sure we had no protection and no voice.''

After the NLRB nixed Electromation's sham committees, workers there voted to join the IBT.

''I don't want to see the law changed. If we didn't have the law, we still wouldn't have our own voice,'' Price said. ''If Congress wants to help working people, you should make it easier, not harder, for us to have unions. You should make it so companies can't threaten and scare people who want to pick their own representatives to negotiate with management. You should protect democracy on the job. That's the American way.''

Several other unions, including the Food and Commercial Workers, brought to the hearing workers who had been subjected to company-dominated employee committees, although they were not allowed to testify.

''Everything was pre-planned,'' said Michelle Grimaldi, a member of UFCW Local 400 at a Woodward and Lothrop department store, describing how the sham committees worked. ''I didn't have a voice. People who had something contrary to the agenda were told to be quiet or were escorted out by the police. In 1979, when we got organized, things changed.''

IBT General Counsel Judith Scott, testifying before the House subcommittee, said cooperative labor-management relations, for which the bill ostensibly was intended, is more likely under the current law.

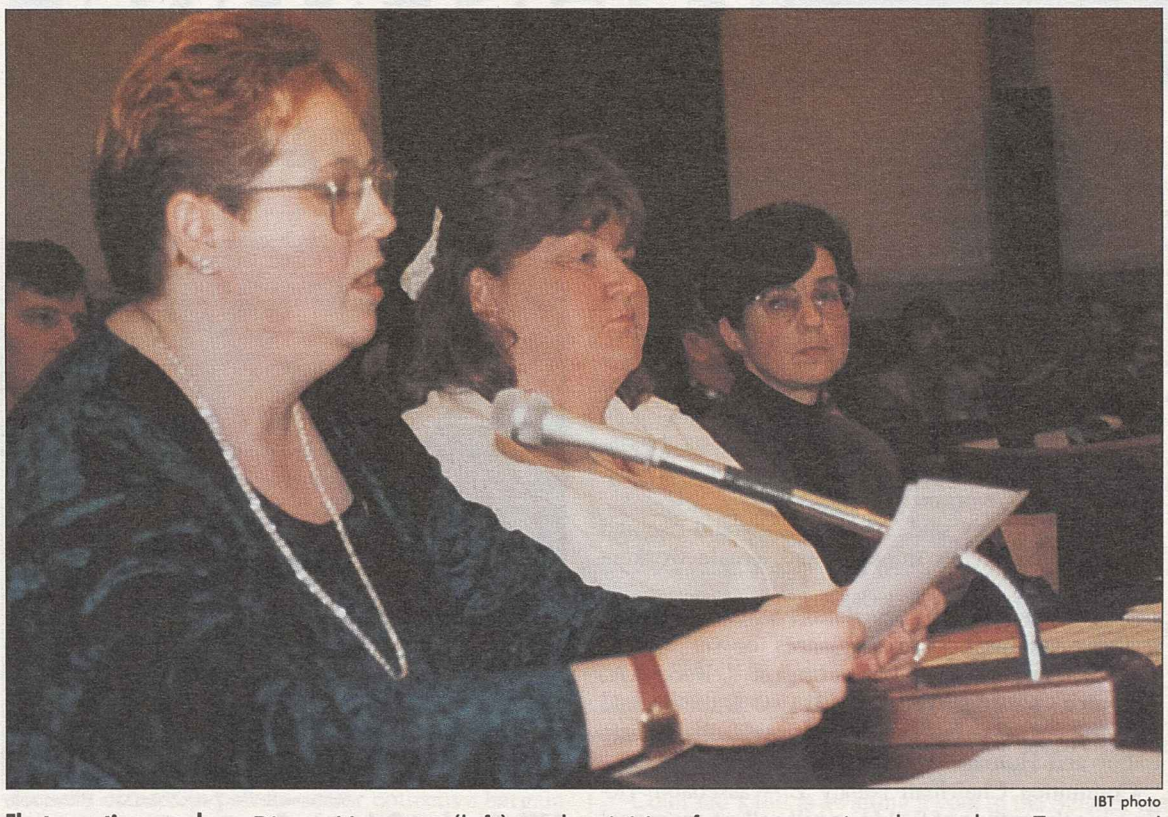
She cited a Cornell University study that showed only 58 NLRB decisions over the past 22 years to disband employer-controlled committees — hardly a wholesale assault on employee involvement committees. Of the 58 cases, the Cornell study showed, 56 involved employers also found guilty of other unfair labor practices.

Employers who are seeking to change the law ''seek not to expand workers' involvement in workplace decision making, but rather to maximize management control,'' Scott said.

Silberman expanded on that point during a forum at Washington-based Cato Institute, noting that only 14 complaints have been filed against the 30,000 companies that have employee involvement structures, about three cases per year since the Electromation case began in 1989. ''We are not talking about a big problem that stands in the way of labor and management working together,'' he said.

The bill, in seeking to destabilize the collective bargaining relationship, is part of the constant management ''desire to reserve for itself complete and total authority to decide unilaterally how much employees will be paid and to determine unilaterally other terms of employment,'' Silberman told the committee.

The key question for Congress to consider, he said, is: ''Are we still going to preserve workers' rights to choose their own representation accountable only to them?''



IBT photo

Electromation workers Diane Verrette (left) and Berna Price detail illegal company union's activities for congressional panel as Teamsters' General Counsel Judith Scott looks on at right.

Why AFL-CIO opposes Big Business TEAM bill

The TEAM Act would amend the National Labor Relations Act to permit employers ''to establish, assist, maintain or participate in'' organizations for their employees. That change would undermine independent representation by allowing the creation of employer-dominated organizations in both union and non-union workplaces.

AFL-CIO opposition is based on these points:

- There is no need for the TEAM Act, and its passage would be a mistake. Right now, employers and employees can work together in teams or other legitimate cooperative arrangements. The best proof of that is the number of employee involvement programs flourishing today.
- This bill would let employers unilaterally dictate who should represent employees in labor-management committees. That is a violation of individual worker rights and is fundamentally anti-democratic. Real representation means you elect the people who speak for you.
- This bill allows employers to undermine democratically chosen union representation and the contracts negotiated through collective bargaining. Employers would be able to bypass the union by setting up committees led by their own hand-picked people to talk about collective bargaining issues.
- The TEAM Act is part of Big Business's agenda for the 104th Congress — overturning laws that protect worker rights. In this case, it's the right to an independent voice in the workplace, but it's part of the same assault.
- The Dunlop Commission confirmed that real cooperation is most effective in unionized companies, where employees have the right to democratically elect their own representatives. Congress should take a stand to protect and enhance worker rights to an independent voice in the workplace, which would improve equality and productivity and build a stronger American economy.

The past as prologue: Law debate carries Wagnerian tones

The current push to restore employer domination of the workplace through weakening the ban on company-run employee organizations bears some remarkable similarities to the debate over the Wagner Act 60 years ago.

An analysis of the current debate by labor historian David Brody, now a professor emeritus at the University of California at Davis, shows management's goal is very similar to today: use the appearance of labor-management cooperation to mask the reality — employer domination of workplace organizations.

Just as in the current effort to pass the so-called TEAM Act, the needs of the national economy were cited as urgent in the 1930s.

In order to keep the ban on company unions from being watered down, Sen. Wagner had to fight off some proposals that were very similar to today's TEAM Act. Then as now, employers proposed innocent-sounding loopholes that gave employers all of the opening they needed to restore their domination.

The first came from an ally, Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins. She proposed defining unions as organizations designed to ''bargain collectively.'' Wagner, who wanted an airtight ban on company unions, said if that were the only standard, ''most of the activity of employers in connection with the company unions we are seeking to outlaw would fall outside the scope of the (National Labor Relations) Act.''

So employers were banned from setting up employee committees for ''dealing with'' employers with respect to employee wages, working conditions or other terms of employment. Today's TEAM Act advocates also say workplace committees can't do any harm as long as they don't bargain.

Another attempt to water down the ban came when Senate Labor Committee Chairman David I. Walsh tried to give the big corporations an out: it would be okay for employers to initiate and influence employee representation committees and pay employees for their time serving on the committees, just as long as they didn't ''interfere with or dominate'' the employee representation programs (ERPs).

''Had the preservation of employee representation been their primary concern, employers should have welcomed the Walsh substitute,'' Brody says. ''But of course their real interest was not protecting the ERPs but fending off genuine collective bargaining.''

So management opposed the Walsh proposal in 1934 because they believed they could win by stonewalling. That miscalculation, plus the 1934 election results, led to the 1935 enactment of the Wagner Act.

By 1935, employer-dominated worker organizations already had a rich history. Prof. Brody traces the Rockefeller family's efforts for ERPs from the disgrace of 20 years before, the 1914 Ludlow Massacre of striking mine workers.

By the time of the Wagner Act debate, Rockefeller's Industrial Relations Counselors (IRC) had two decades to polish the arguments, set up the sham committees and mount a well-funded campaign to frustrate real worker representation. The effort of the 1920s succeeded in cutting AFL membership in half.

But the ''tremendous rush to put ERPs into effect, sometimes with a charade of employee consultation,'' didn't come, Brody shows, until President Roosevelt's proposed National Industrial Recovery Act used such phrases as ''full freedom of association'' and ''actual liberty of contract'' in defining unions. The NIRA didn't survive, but the language Wagner used to assure employee control of worker organizations did.

Today, the committees management seeks to dominate are more likely named Employee Involvement Committees — EICs — instead of ERPs, and their well-financed management mouthpiece is known as the Labor Policy Association — LPA — instead of ILC. But the motive of employer domination is the same.

— Rex Hardesty

Bills would gut worker health, safety protections

By Colleen M. O'Neill

In the face of a political atmosphere that is turning increasingly ugly for workers, labor is standing up for workplace safety and health.

The groundwork for an all-out fight against anti-regulatory initiatives put forth by the Republican-controlled Congress is being laid through testimony on Capitol Hill, coalition building and the preparation of materials for what promises to be a protracted campaign.

Several legislative measures now pending would:

- Freeze new regulations and make a freeze retroactive to Nov. 20.
- Delay standards on ergonomics and mine safety in development, while postponing final rules for recently passed legislation, including the Social Security Domestic Employment Reform Act and the Family and Medical Leave Act.
- Put in place a regulatory budget, capping the number of regulations promulgated by all agencies so that in order to put in place a new rule, one would have to be jettisoned.
- Make regulations subject to cost-benefit analysis instead of applying health standards, forcing agencies to put a dollar value on unquantifiable factors (a human life, birth defects, a lead-poisoned child) and then weigh those values against industry's profits.
- Give the Office of Management and Budget explicit veto power over rules.
- Create "peer review panels" with veto power — thus giving a regulated industry the power to veto any rule it didn't like.
- Overturn the Supreme Court's decision in Dole vs. Steelworkers, which said that OMB could not prohibit requirements that companies make certain information on chemical hazards available to their workers.

Such legislation, if passed, would mean weaker to non-existent enforcement by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, fewer OSHA inspections, a halt to such major job safety standards as worker exposure limits for cancer-causing chemicals, delay in scaffold protections for construction workers and protections for mine workers — and increased fatalities, injuries and occupational disease.

"The legislation would undermine existing federal safety, health and environmental legislation, scale back or revoke safeguards and create a regulatory system so convoluted that all efforts to protect the public would be effectively paralyzed," said Peg Seminario, AFL-CIO director of job safety.

The AFL-CIO has begun the movement against those intent on gutting regulations on several fronts. Union members and representatives have been testifying before House committees for several weeks, with more planned, while the federation has joined with environmental, consumer, civil rights and religious groups in the Citizens for Sensible Safeguards coalition. **(See accompanying story.)**

A North Carolina mother with first-hand knowledge of the effects of lax safety in the workplace put a human face on the problem for lawmakers.

One of Brenda Enfinger's sons was killed on the job in 1987, while another son was massively exposed to chemicals on the job and now — on a good day — is capable only of taking care of his two young children for a couple hours a day.

She detailed for the House Economic and Educational Opportunities oversight subcommittee the job safety improvements made by North Carolina in the wake of the September 1991 fire at a chicken-processing plant in Hamlet, and lobbied against regulation-gutting legislation.

"We need federal OSHA standards," she said Feb. 6. "If left up to the states, protection will vary widely and could lead to competition on the basis of lax regulations. We have already been the victim of this in North Carolina. The Imperial Food Products plant came to us from Pennsylvania, where they were having difficulty with OSHA."

UAW Safety and Health Director Frank Mirer on Feb. 8 told the House Commerce Committee that the regulatory provisions in H.R. 9 "will be detrimental to the public health process in general and to OSHA standard-setting in particular."

Regarding cost analysis, Mirer asked: "What is the value of lives not lost, limbs not amputated, diseases not suffered? Does it boil down to wages lost and medical costs incurred by the victims? When the interest rate goes up, the dollar value of lives and health goes down."

The Steelworkers told a House subcommittee Feb. 7 that proposed legislation would imbue OMB with inappropriately vast powers.

OMB has a history of "extensive interference under Executive Orders on scientific and technical issues," noted USWA Legislative Director Jack Sheehan, and in the 1980s "became a 'super regulator,' substituting its views and its political ideology for the scientific and policy determinations of the regulatory agencies."

Members of the Rubber Workers also were set to testify at a Feb. 16 House Economic and Educational Opportunities oversight subcommittee hearing.

The AFL-CIO and its affiliates also are gearing up for a fight over OSHA funding, with the labor subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee poised to begin making cuts Feb. 23.

Broad-based coalition fights anti-regulatory drive

Labor joined with its friends in the environmental, civil rights, religious and consumer movements to launch a coalition to fight the anti-regulatory fever of the 104th Congress.

Citizens for Sensible Safeguards, a non-partisan group composed of more than 200 organizations, seeks to stop passage of legislation that would freeze such protections as safe water and meat inspection standards, as well as the development of an ergonomics standard.

The coalition also opposes legislation that would add layers of bureaucracy to regulatory agencies and delay for years government action on health, safety and environmental laws.

"For decades, ordinary working Americans have fought for basic safeguards against workplace health and safety hazards," said Service Employees President John J. Sweeney at a Capitol Hill press briefing launching the coalition. "Yet all too often, workers and their families in this country must continue to choose between a paycheck and their health.

"Last year another 10,000 workers died from injuries and 100,000 died from illnesses caused by their workplaces. Millions more became permanently disabled. Without the workplace health and safety standards currently in place, hundreds of thousands more workers would be included in these grim statistics," he said.

Actor and environmentalist Ted Danson set the tone with his challenge to Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) and Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole (R-Kan.), calling on the Republican leadership to discuss the many issues surrounding the anti-regulatory agenda before enacting legislation.

"If the American people look at the fine print in the 'Contract with America,' they'll be appalled to discover that its provisions call for weakening crucial safeguards protecting the safety of the water we drink, the food we eat, the places where we work and the environment that sustains us," warned Danson, president of American Oceans Campaign.

Joining Sweeney and Danson at the Feb. 15 briefing were Nancy Donley, whose son died after eating tainted meat; Robert James Funches, a second-grader who has been diagnosed with asthma linked to inadequate environmental health safeguards; and Gary Bass, head of OMB Watch and chair of the coalition.

— Colleen M. O'Neill



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

The United States cannot boost its standard of living unless the relationship between workers and management is more cooperative and based on shared goals and responsibilities, House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.) told the UAW's community action conference in Washington. UAW President Owen Bieber, seated next to Gephardt, said the real economic issue facing the country is "low and falling wages, not higher taxes." He called for unionists to help rebuild the Democratic party by offering new ideas, registering new voters and grass-roots organizing.

JOB SAFETY

Agencies cited in fire deaths

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration cited two federal agencies in the deaths of 14 firefighters last summer in a Colorado canyon.

The Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service were issued willful and serious violation notices under the agency's general duty clause in the incident. OSHA cited management failure and the violation of standard firefighting procedures. The agency cannot fine other federal agencies.

"I applaud OSHA for issuing these citations in the Glenwood Springs tragedy," said Fire Fighters President Alfred K. Whitehead. "The actions leading to these citations highlight the need for OSHA coverage of all professional fire fighters."

Reich: End black lung

An advisory committee to determine ways to eliminate black lung and silicosis among coal miners is in the works, according to Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich.

A labor representative will be part of the seven-member panel, Reich said, with recommendations expected within six months of the committee's formation. Black lung is a term describing lung disease resulting from excessive exposure to respirable coal mine dust, while silicosis results specifically from quartz dust.

The group will consider measures to control dust, permissible exposure limits and improvements in monitoring and sampling programs.



Once bustling with the activity of 4,000 workers, the Zenith plant in Springfield, Mo., is nearly cleaned out and has been purchased by a sporting goods distributor.

Turning out the lights on the last U.S. Zenith plant

Continued from Page 1

tion to receiving low wages at the non-union facility, workers are expected to contribute more than $50 a week for dependent health care coverage.

"I've raised a good family, and I feel basically betrayed by the company," Millican said.

There's a lot of that feeling going around Springfield. Michael Yeubanks, business manager of Electrical Workers Local 1453, noted that although unemployment is low in the region, workers who find new jobs can expect entry-level wages and a sharp reduction in benefits.

"They all have to start at the bottom again," he said. "And that's the hard part. A lot of people have worked up, have long periods of vacation, and now start at zero."

"Basically, they'd be starting over," said Mary Schaefer, assistant director of Job Council of the Ozarks, a municipal agency that has worked with the IBEW local and other groups to ease the transition of workers in the local economy. "And that's the hardest thing for many of them to accept. I think in a select few cases they might have bettered themselves."

Bill Beeman, a former television technician, is one of the lucky ones who landed on their feet. Hit by an earlier wave of layoffs in 1991, the 23-year Zenith veteran spent a summer looking for work, and then went back to school to earn an associate degree in computer technology. His wife worked throughout.

"It took me three years to get my degree," he said. "After the initial 78 weeks (26 weeks of unemployment compensation followed by 52 weeks of Trade Readjustment Allowances), I went back to work. So I worked full time and went to school full time. I'd leave home at 7:15 in the morning and get home at 10 at night."

"The entire allotment to get through the training is not adequate at all," he said. "You've got a maximum of 78 weeks assistance at $175 a week, and after the 78 weeks runs out, that's it. They'll pay for schooling, but there's no living expenses after 78 weeks."

"Working full time and going to school full time is a big load. I was able to get it done, but you really have to be committed to do that, and a lot of (the workers) just don't have the capacity," Beeman said.

"Older folks are scared"

The age of the work force is an obvious factor in how well displaced workers will be able to make the kinds of personal sacrifices Beeman and his family made.

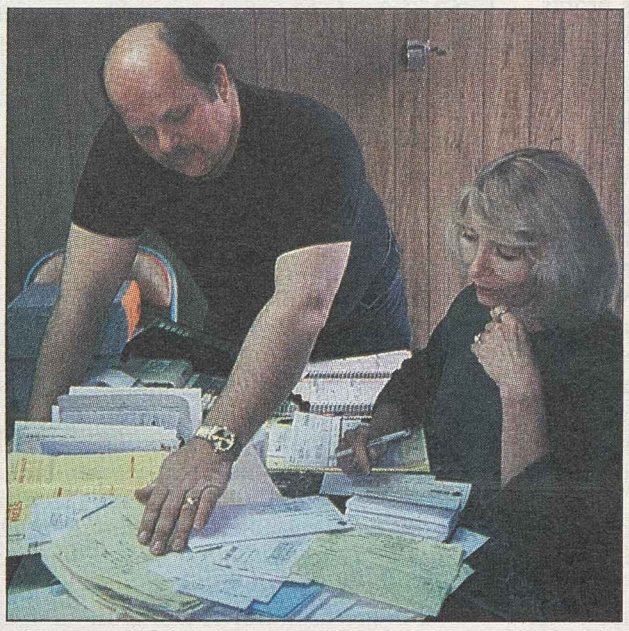
"I think they're scared," Schaefer said.

"The older folks do have a rougher time deciding what to do, just because they've been with the same company for 25 or 30 years," said Alice Simpson, supervisor of the Job Council's Worker Reentry Program.

"I think they're also conscious that there's a possibility that the employers might not want to hire them because of their age," although "a lot of the employers in this area are very impressed with people who have been able to stick with the same company for many years. So it's plus and minus, basically."

"The Zenith workers . . . have special needs," Simpson said. "We've been finding Zenith people with transferable skills and they are employable," she added, but by definition it's harder for people with lower math scores — the very ones who need training the most.

And universally, they're accustomed to an America of a better day, with "a good benefits package and a really good hourly rate of pay."



"They all have to start at the bottom again. And that's the hard part. A lot of people have worked up, have long periods of vacation, and now start at zero."

—Michael Yeubanks, IBEW Local 1453 business manager, with assistant Janice Rose in union hall

A Zenith Coordinators Task Force, made up of representatives of the Job Council, IBEW Local 1453, the state AFL-CIO, state employment agencies, United Way of the Ozarks, Zenith, the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce and local universities, was formed to come up with ideas for helping displaced Zenith workers.

Using a 1992 $750,000 federal grant, the Job Council and other organizations have provided a comprehensive array of services to displaced workers, including job fairs, a rapid response program, transition team, newsletter and seminars to improve job searches.

Although many of the services traditionally are offered by the agency, however, the grant period ended last June. The Job Council is continuing to provide services to workers in the current and final wave of layoffs.

Trail of company lies

Yet, none of it should have been necessary. For years, at management's insistence, workers made a series of concessions in order, they thought, to save their jobs. Wages were frozen. Contracts were re-opened.

- In 1980, Local 1453 and Zenith readjusted the night-shift differential from 10 percent to a flat cents-per-hour basis.
- In 1983, the two parties agreed to an 18-month contract extension.
- In 1987, under threat of losing 600 jobs to Mexico, workers agreed to an 8.2 percent wage cut and a five-year contract extension.
- In 1991, Zenith announced it was "consolidating" its color TV final assembly and plastic cabinet finishing operations in Mexico.

According to the late Robert Mingus, former business manager of Local 1453, "it was obvious that the Springfield plant would not retain work over Mexico even if we could work for minimum wage and no benefits." The 48-year-old Mingus, who had no history of heart problems, died the following year from a heart attack. His wife, Zenith worker Anita Mingus, had no doubt about the source of the stress that caused his death.

In a 1991 letter to employees announcing a 75 percent reduction in the size of the work force, Zenith Vice President H. Vincent Kamler Jr. still maintained "there is a future for Zenith in Springfield" for the remaining 300 to 500 workers.

"The story going around the plant was, if you didn't give them the wage concession, they were going to move to Mexico," said Lionel Hudspeth, a line inspector and relief operator until his 24.5-year career at Zenith ended in May 1992. "We just gave them an extra five years to finalize their plans to move. We just helped pay for it."

Trade adjustment limits

Hudspeth's wife, Diana, a repair person and quality control inspector who worked for Zenith for 26 years, lost her job a year later. Because she went back to work for a month last summer, the only work either has had, she may qualify for extended benefits under NAFTA Trade Adjustment Assistance.

Diana has studied hospitality management, and Lionel has studied business, "but there's no demand for it. There's a surplus of business teachers in the state."

As of Feb. 6, the Labor Department has received petitions for NAFTA-TAA for workers in 360 firms in 41 states. So far, DoL has made 165 certifications, including the one for Zenith, covering nearly 20,000 workers.

Yeubanks thinks NAFTA, which went into effect Jan. 1, 1994, made a difference at Zenith. "We negotiated a contract in November of 1993, and in February they said they were taking the rest of it to Mexico. I have a strong feeling that (NAFTA) helped them make their decision. . . . Within 45 days after signing, they announced they were taking all their stuff to Mexico."

The ax fell with little ceremony from management. "We tried to get them to do these rapid response meetings on company time," said Yeubanks. "They wouldn't do it. On company time, you have a larger group of people who can attend and receive the information, and they wouldn't do that.

"The only thing I could get was for them to pay five union members to come as counselors, and that's all the work force got out of it," he said. "And all the meetings were held (at the union hall) on this batch of layoffs."

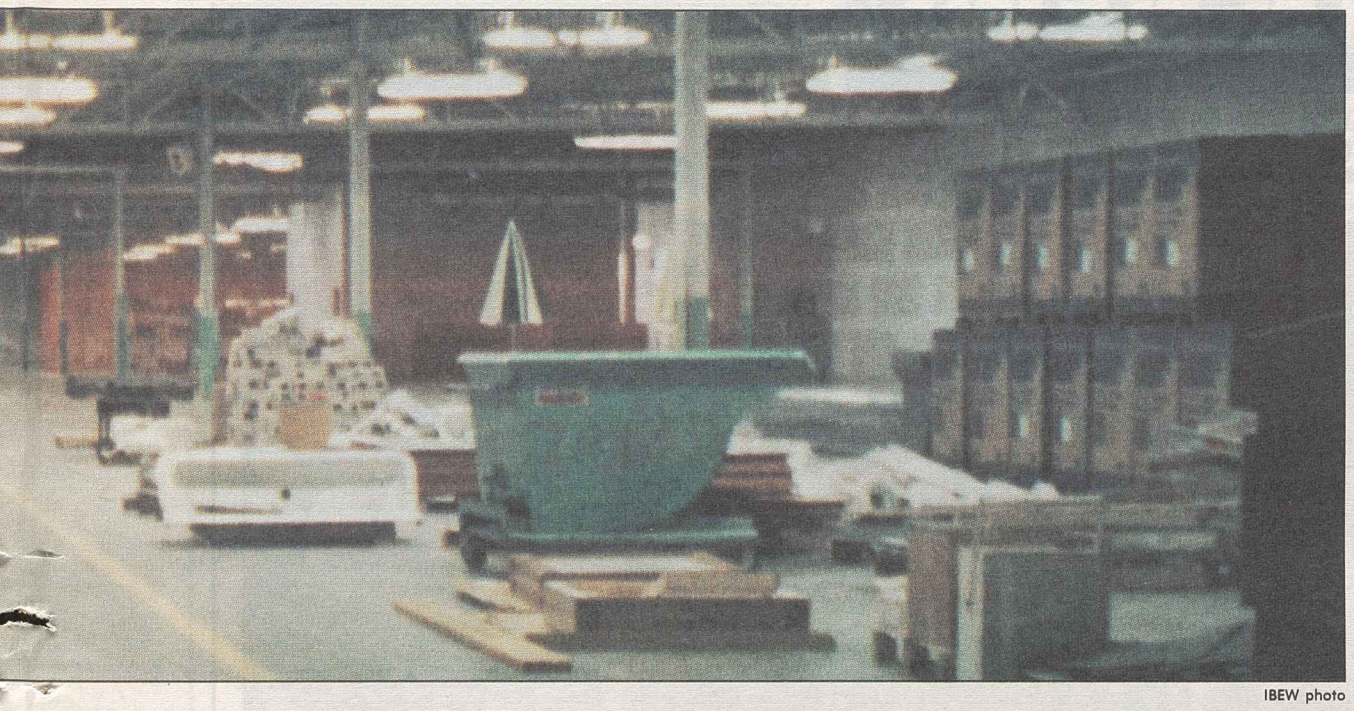
"They didn't offer any condolences or pat you on the back or offer you a loan or a TV or anything," said Hudspeth.

Feelings of betrayal

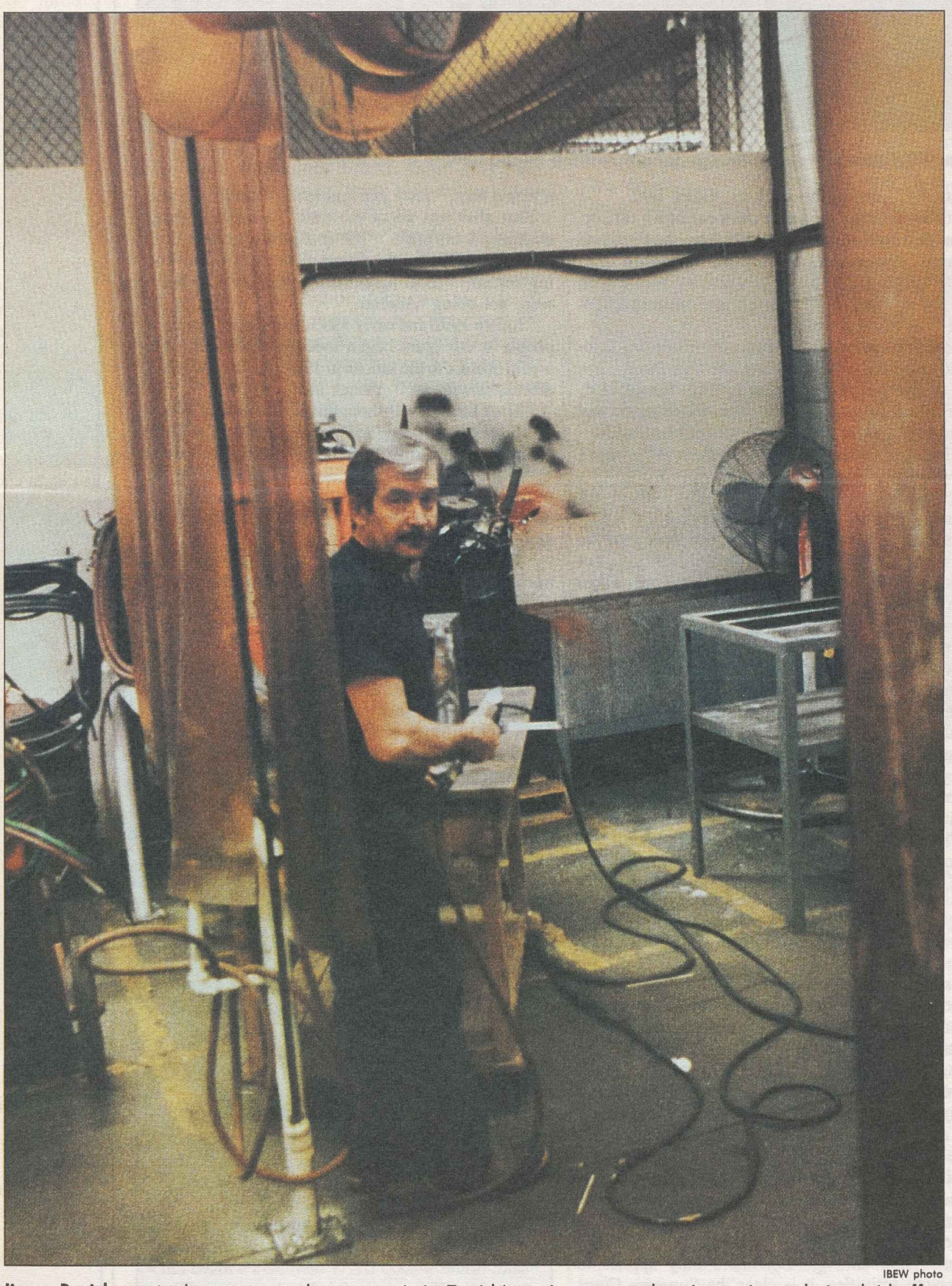
"They haven't done anything," said Millican. "That's why I feel betrayed. I put a lot of faith in the company." He said Zenith's position had been, "We've always made money in Springfield." However, "they can make more when they produce down there," he said.

To Yeubanks, the argument that NAFTA is going to create Mexican demand for U.S. products just doesn't wash.

"I hear they're going to buy stuff from us," he said. "How in the heck can you buy when you get 29 damn



IBEW photo



IBEW photo

Jimmy Daniels, a single parent, makes a repair in Zenith's maintenance shop just prior to being laid off.

dollars a week? They're not going to buy a Zenith TV. That's baloney. If they can put clothes on their back and food on the table and some kind of a roof over their head, they're doing good.''

Beeman said he's ''not real comfortable right now with the idea of bailing Mexico out. We're talking about letting the free market dictate what happens. Well, that's part of the free market. Mexico's had plenty of opportunity to make a go of their own country, and it's crumbled underneath them.''

''Cheap labor in the Third World countries is what's killing the United States,'' Hudspeth said. ''My dad told me back in the late '40s, if the United States doesn't stop exporting technology, we're going to be in trouble one of these days. I didn't pay much attention at the time, but it turns out he was right after all. They don't lower the price of the product when they have it made in a foreign country at a cheaper labor rate,'' he added.

''It's affected us here,'' Yeubanks said of the plant closing. ''It's ruined a lot of lives.''

Mexican union files NAFTA charges on Sprint shutdown

Sony violates labor rights, workers testify at hearing

By David Kameras

U.S. workers are not alone in seeking relief from the hardships imposed by the North American Free Trade Agreement, even as its impact is felt north of the border.

The Union of Telephone Workers of the Republic of Mexico has filed a complaint with the Mexican government over Sprint Corp.'s shutdown of its Spanish-language subsidiary, La Conexion Familiar, one week before a representation election involving the Communications Workers was scheduled to be held.

The petition, the first filed with Mexico's National Administrative Office, the agency overseeing labor standards under NAFTA, shows that worker representatives on both sides of the border will continue to put NAFTA's anemic side agreements to the test.

In its complaint, the Mexican union accused Sprint of implementing a ''vicious anti-union policy,'' causing it to fire 235 Latino employees under guise of alleged financial problems. ''The workers of La Conexion Familiar are the only Sprint long-distance workers who have pursued their right to a union election to the final step,'' the union noted.

Francisco Hernandez Juarez, general secretary of the union, called for reinstatement of the workers, with recognition of their right ''to organize freely without interrogations, intimidation or firings,'' and a prohibition against Sprint setting up shop in Mexico ''given its track record of abuses against workers who are seeking to organize unions free and independently.''

''We do not want this to happen with Sprint in Mexico,'' the union said.

The union also urged that a forum be held this year by the NAOs of the three NAFTA countries ''to explore ways to collaborate and discuss appropriate standards concerning workers' rights. . . good-paying jobs, as well as other important matters'' in the telecommunications industry.

Meanwhile, the U.S. NAO heard testimony Feb. 14 in San Antonio on labor rights violations by Sony Corp. at its Magneticos de Mexico facilities in Nuevo Laredo. An earlier petition against General Electric by the unaffiliated United Electrical Workers was withdrawn.

Twelve workers chronicled a number of abuses, including interference in attempts to meet to discuss union leadership, less than one day's notice of a union election and violent police attacks during a peaceful demonstration. Some workers have been fired and blacklisted for trying to organize.

''The workers play by the rules, but, at every turn, they are frustrated by the company and the. . . official union,'' said Jerome I. Levinson, lead attorney for the four labor and human rights groups that have brought the case.

''The Mexican government, instead of affirming the right of free association, is an active collaborator with the company and the official union in effectively preventing the workers from exercising that right,'' he said.

Sony didn't show up for the hearing, choosing instead to communicate with the NAO through written statements prepared by its retained law firm.

''It would be a travesty of this process,'' Levinson told the NAO, ''for you to give equal weight to the testimony of the workers who are here before you, at considerable risk to themselves, and a faceless document submitted by the Sony corporation lawyer.

''The whole point of the side agreement was supposed to be sunshine, to get things out in the open,'' said AFL-CIO economist Greg Woodhead. ''This establishes a terrible precedent by allowing corporate interests to be represented by corporate communiques, either telephoned or written.''

''The NAO needs to follow up to see what happens to these 12 workers, to see if they're fired for coming to the United States,'' Woodhead said.

A report by the NAO based on the hearing is due out by April 11.

Bridgestone tactics puncture model relationship

Rubber Workers squeezed in company power play

By James B. Parks

What once was a model partnership between workers and management at Bridgestone/Firestone has deteriorated in just six years into a long strike and a strained relationship punctuated by bitterness and disappointment.

"We played golf with the supervisors and bowled with them. It was pretty much a family affair," said Roger Gates, president of striking Rubber Workers Local 713 in Decatur, Ill. "It caught everyone by surprise. We had a team effort trying to save jobs and then it was 'Katie, bar the door!' "

There are about 5,000 URW members on strike nationwide at both Bridgestone/Firestone and Pirelli Armstrong in what has become the longest strike on record for the union, surpassing a 141-day strike in 1976.

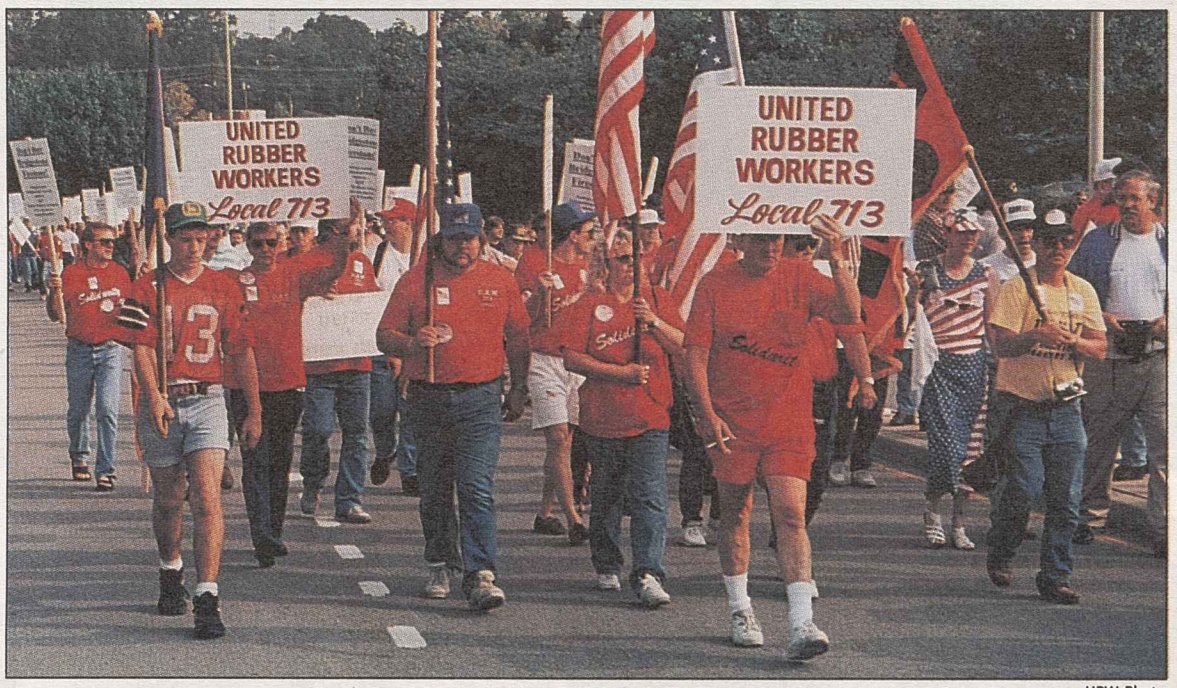
Throughout the Bridgestone strike, the company has refused to reopen bargaining, claiming that the union received its "last, best and final offer," one that demands that workers give up supplemental unemployment and workers' compensation benefits, paid union time and future cost-of-living adjustments as part of a new performance-based pay system.

The last time negotiators met was Jan. 18. Then, under pressure from President Clinton, Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich and four U.S. senators, Bridgestone/Firestone officials reluctantly agreed to meet with representatives of the employees it had once worked with hand in hand to boost company profits.

But the situation was much different in 1989, when Tokyo-based Bridgestone bought the ailing Firestone Tire & Rubber Co. It had purchased a Firestone plant in LaVergne, Tenn., in 1983 and, through an innovative employee participation program, turned the plant around. In six years, the plant grew from 250 employees to 970 working four shifts, with a second plant under construction.

"They asked, 'what can we do to make your job easier?' and people started suggesting. Firestone always said that before but they never followed up to make sure things got done," Dan Bailey, then-president of URW Local 1055, said in 1989. The plan was so successful, Bridgestone implemented it at all its facilities, with great success. Productivity and quality increased. Labor relations were so good that the company and union received a national federal mediation award in 1991.

But in 1991, after the latest contract was signed, everything changed, Gates said. "Upper management went off the deep end. They decided to make changes and they pulled out all the stops." There was a layoff of more than 480 people at the Decatur plant, something the company had promised not to do if the cooperative efforts saved money. "That sent up resentment" among the workers, Gates said.



URW Photo

Striking URW members picket Bridgestone/Firestone headquarters in Nashville.

With the selection of a new chief executive officer, and saddled with an enormous debt from the Firestone purchase, Bridgestone starting taking a hard line. "They bought a pig in a poke and they paid a high price for it," said Dave Yurick, president of URW Local 7 in Akron, Ohio.

Bridgestone paid $80 a share for Firestone, a publicly held company, after a bidding war with Pirelli. The stock at that time was worth about $26, Yurick said. The Firestone plants had not been modernized and Bridgestone had to pay to upgrade equipment.

Rather than sitting down with workers to find ways to save money — as they had done in the past — Bridgestone's new management began planning to eliminate costs in ways that hurt workers.

Ironically, the first workers hit by the new squeeze were the those at the LaVergne plant, who are not covered by URW's master contract. After they walked out in a contract dispute in 1991, the company refused to negotiate and imposed drastic changes in work rules and hours. Workers eventually ended their strike and returned to work under the imposed conditions.

That contract expires in April and workers expect that the company will demand the same unacceptable "final" terms given to the current strikers, according to current Local 1055 President Tommy Powell. "They've made it plain that the last and final offer they made to the strikers will be it. It would be foolish to think differently."

"There is no relationship between the union and the company now," Powell said. "For the last two years, the company has been managing by intimidation and fear." They just ignore the contract, he said.

That also was about the time Yurick saw things changing at his plant. "The change was coming from corporate in Nashville. I started to see things not being settled. Verbal agreements we had to do things were not being honored."

"In late 1992 and early 1993, the human resources people at our plant began meeting about what they would present to the unions in 1994, but they wouldn't discuss it with us," Yurick said.

"They have a well-thought-out strategy on how to break the union," said Jeff Jones, president of URW Local 1155 in Nashville. Although his local is covered by a separate seven-year contract that does not expire until 2000, Jones says the workers already feel the heat from the company's treatment of their fellow union members.

"We're still working to maintain a cooperative relationship, but the company's actions in relationship to the other locals has strained our relationship," he said. "We are very disappointed with the decision to replace workers."

The strike is taking its toll, but the worst may be yet to come. Bridgestone admitted that the strike has cost the company about $80 million. It lost $1 billion from 1990 through 1992 before posting small profits of $6 million and $10 million in 1993 and 1994.

But greater damage may be done to the company's image and good name, Yurick warned. "What value is there in the goodwill of a name? If the bitterness remains after the strike is over, people won't buy Bridgestone/Firestone tires. If that continues, will the company continue to operate in North America?"

NLRB backs property over labor rights

A divided National Labor Relations Board dealt a setback to organized labor by including private-property protests against low wages under a ban that previously applied to union organizing.

The 3-2 decisions in two separate cases, involving Leslie Homes Inc. and Makro Inc., allow employers to bar non-employee union representatives from engaging in "area standards" picketing on their property.

In a stinging dissent, board members Margaret Browning and John Truesdale charged that the NLRB, with these decisions, was abdicating its role "as the protector of employee rights to organize, to bargain collectively and to engage in concerted activity for mutual aid and protection."

The board should not diminish the scope of protected organizing activity "based on a 'sense' that the Supreme Court is 'concerned' for employers' property rights," they said.

The three-member majority — Chairman William Gould and members James Stephens and Charles Cohen — cited the U.S. Supreme Court's 1992 ruling in Lechmere Inc. vs. NLRB, which curtailed non-employee organizing on private property.

Under Lechmere, union organizers have no right to access unless there are no other reasonable alternative means of access.

Leslie Homes arose from a dispute between the Carpenters and the Pennsylvania builder over the use of non-union labor on a condominium project. Although UBC members worked on the first 50 units through a subcontractor, Leslie Homes then began employing non-union carpenters directly and failed to pay the prevailing wage.

In April 1990, UBC picketers stood in front of a model condominium and passed out handbills complaining that some workers were receiving lower wages than the area standards for such labor. The picketers left after the company threatened their arrest.

The majority ruling in favor of the Leslie owners reasoned that although Lechmere only applies to organizing activities, it is clear the Supreme Court intended to protect property rights, and that there was no reason to think it was limited to organizing.

The second case, Makro Inc., grew out of Food and Commercial Workers attempts to picket a non-union retail grocery at an Ohio shopping mall. On opening day of the store, members of UFCW Local 88 picketed the store, calling for patrons to stay away "for the American standard of living."

Makro and the mall owners obtained a court order moving the pickets to the mall parking lot. The NLRB said this was a reasonable alternative.

— James B. Parks

Caterpillar talks suspended

Talks between the UAW and Caterpillar Inc. on economic issues broke down after the company rejected new proposals by the union, but federal mediators said negotiations on non-economic matters are expected to resume in a few weeks.

"Our bargaining committee put forth a serious, responsible proposal and we're willing to discuss all the issues that separate us," said Jerry Baker, chairman of the union's Caterpillar central bargaining committee.

The UAW proposals contained new options in health care, job security and wages, the union said. Some 14,000 UAW members walked out June 21, 1994, over unfair labor practices. The strike affects eight plants in Illinois, Pennsylvania and Colorado. This strike has become the longest at Caterpillar, exceeding the 205-day strike in 1982-83.

Meanwhile, the National Labor Relations Board issued the 134th unfair labor practices complaint against the company since the strike began. The Feb. 9 complaint charges the company threatened to impose broad and restrictive standards of conduct on striking union members at the end of the strike.

BARGAINING

UAW-Case contract approved

By a huge margin, UAW members approved a new 38-month contract with Case Corp. that includes three lump-sum payments totaling 10 percent.

The contract covers 2,800 employees of the agricultural equipment maker at five plants in four states. Under the contract, workers will receive a lump sum payment of 4 percent in the first year and subsequent payments of 3 percent in each of the two following years.

In addition, workers gained a guaranteed sharing benefit each year of 36 cents per hour worked. The pact also improves 401(k) benefits and increases pension base rates.

"The new agreement advances the job and income security of our members at Case, improves pensions, maintains and improves health care," said UAW Secretary-Treasurer Bill Casstevens, who heads the union's agricultural implement department.

URW in GM accord

The Rubber Workers avoided a strike and gained increased wages under a new five-year agreement with General Motors Corp.

The contract, approved Jan. 23 by members of URW Local 87, covers 900 workers at GM's Inland Fisher Guide plant in Vandalia, Ohio. The plant makes air bags, instrument panels and steering wheels for a wide variety of GM vehicles.

Under the agreement, entry wages for production workers will increase by $1 per hour immediately and another $1.50 in three steps of 50 cents each in the next two years. Skilled trades wages will increase by $2 immediately and then follow the same incremental schedule raises as production workers. The contract also includes a 3 percent across-the-board raise in four of the five years, a cost-of-living adjustment and performance bonuses.

Local 87 threatened to walk out Jan. 11 over health and safety and subcontracting issues. The health issues were resolved by GM's promise to correct poor ventilation in the plant. The subcontracting issues will be handled by a joint labor-management committee.

IBT ratifies Price Club pact

The Teamsters overwhelmingly ratified a new three-year contract with Price Club that provides wage increases of $1.50 per hour for top-scale employees.

The agreement covers some 7,800 employees in the membership discount chain's California outlets, including clerks, shipping and receiving, office administration and security personnel, according to IBT Local 66 Secretary-Treasurer Peter Espudo.

Workers at the top of the scale will receive pay increases of 50 cents per hour each year for the term of the deal. The contract also establishes a new 401(k) plan and a more flexible health care plan.

Guild approves AP deal

Members of the Wire Service Guild ratified a new two-year contract with the Associated Press that raises wages for 1,400 reporters, editors, photographers and business department personnel around the country.

Under the agreement, wages will increase by 3 percent immediately and again in December 1995. In the second year of the contract, the pay differential for employees in four cities — Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles and San Francisco — will increase from $63 to $80.

The contract, approved Jan. 4, includes improvements in pension and life insurance benefits. The New York-based Wire Service Guild is a local of The Newspaper Guild.

TCU clericals OK pact

Clerical employees represented by the Transportation Communications Union ratified a new five-year contract with Illinois Central railroad that provides a 17 percent wage increase.

The 500 workers covered by the contract will receive a $1,000 signing bonus and a new 401(k) plan. The contract also improves the work rules and increases seniority coverage.

"This agreement shows that the Railway Labor Act works when a railroad steps up to the plate and bargains fairly," said TCU President Robert Scardelletti.

30 years, 3 elections, no talks

Worker rights run up against hospital stonewall

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

Few know as well as the 60 skilled maintenance workers at Long Island College Hospital how poorly the nation's labor laws serve workers.

Thirty years after first voting for union representation, the workers have been told they can have another election, their third. The hospital has yet to bargain.

Since voting for Service Employees Local 144 in July 1964, the workers have endured years of hospital stalling and stonewalling, even after Congress specifically brought private hospital workers under the National Labor Relations Act in 1974 and the Supreme Court upheld the National Labor Relations Board's rule for determining appropriate units at hospitals.

"Every possible out was used by the employer even before the appeals, change in interpretation of the law and even a re-interpretation of the law," said Pam Woywod, assistant to the president of SEIU Local 144. "The employer also began appealing the NLRB decisions."

Instead of bargaining in good faith, the hospital spent years appealing the election and further NLRB decisions in court after court. Finally, the NLRB has ordered a third election. Nearly half of the current work force was involved in that first election in 1964.

The second election was ordered in 1979 after years of litigation, and employees voted for the SEIU by 37 to 23. The hospital still refused to bargain, contending the bargaining unit was not appropriate. The board issued an unfair labor practice complaint charging the hospital with refusing to bargain, but the case languished in courts throughout the decade.

The 1989 NLRB rules for hospital units established eight separate categories for workers, including a unit for skilled maintenance workers. The Supreme Court upheld that unit determination rule in 1991.

After the Supreme Court ruling, the board in June 1991 again took up the Long Island case, and an administrative law judge determined that a unit consisting of maintenance and engineering department employees was appropriate both in 1980, when the hospital refused to bargain, as well as under the final NLRB rule, then in effect.

In March 1993, a three-member NLRB panel adopted the ALJ's recommended bargaining order and petitioned the court for enforcement. On Dec. 22, 1994, the NLRB directed a third election after accepting the April 1994 decision by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 2nd Circuit. The election is scheduled for Feb. 24.

The case is an example of how the law allows "dilatory tactics used by employers," said Irwin Bluestein, attorney for the union. "It is abhorrent that these workers have had to wait 30 years for union representation when most of the health care industry in this area have been organized for years."



AFSCME photo

Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich congratulates District 1199-C President Henry Nicholas on new contract as AFSCME President Gerald W. McEntee helps mark the occasion.

'Landmark' hospital pact wins praise

By Colleen M. O'Neill

Worker retraining and job security provisions in a new AFSCME contract for Philadelphia nurses has drawn praise from Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich, who celebrated the agreement in a ceremony in Washington.

Reich praised officials from Hahnemann Hospital and the Hospital of the Medical College of Pennsylvania for sensitivity to the needs of employees during a period of restructuring. He also lauded AFSCME District 1199-C for "exercising leadership" in working out the innovative agreement.

"This landmark contract is good for our members and good for the industry," said National Union of Hospital Health Care Employees/District 1199-C President Henry Nicholas. "It recognizes the need for long-term stability in the health care industry, while offering safeguards to help insure that workers won't become victims of restructuring plans."

The five-year contract ratified last fall covers 2,000 workers and requires that an employee laid off as a result of restructuring will be guaranteed up to 80 percent of his or her salary and family health care coverage for up to one year, drawing from a job security fund built from contributions by the hospital and workers.

The hospitals also agreed to put 1.5 percent of gross payroll in a union-management training and upgrading fund. A similar proposal was suggested by Reich shortly after he took his post as labor secretary.

The contract also states that if a hospital transfers a union member to a lower-paying position or reduces the employee's hours as a result of restructuring, the employee's base weekly pay will not be reduced.

Workers will receive pay raises totaling 16 percent by the year 2000 under the pact, and enhancements were made for part-time employees and retirees as well.

Part-timers will be covered by the job security fund as well, if they meet certain criteria. Further, all employees who have worked an average of the regular full-time workweek for any consecutive four months will become full-timers.

Beginning in July, the retirement age will be reduced from 65 to 62, with retirees aged 62 to 64 with at least 20 years of service provided the same medical coverage as those who have reached age 65 — including such benefits as medical, hospital, anesthesia, drug, vision care and private-duty nursing.

Also, the pact provides for a $2.5 million retirement incentive plan and enhances pension benefits.

The contract goes into effect July 1. Four other Philadelphia hospitals representing another 1,100 AFSCME employees have agreed to the same contract terms, with negotiations continuing at several other facilities.

ECONOMY

Benefits of productivity gains elude workers

By David Kameras

With U.S. business productivity continuing to rise and worker buying power continuing to fall, it is clear that "workers are not getting their fair share," the AFL-CIO said.

Private business productivity in 1994 rose 2.3 percent, following increases of 1.5 percent in 1993 and 3.0 percent in 1992, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported.

The increases in manufacturing productivity have been even more dramatic: 4.9 percent in 1994, 3.2 percent in 1993 and 2.1 percent in 1992.

"These figures are well above the trend of the 1980s, and show the economy has the capacity for wage increases well above those being given," said Rudy Oswald, director of the AFL-CIO Economic Research Department.

"It's very clear from the BLS data that employee earnings are rising much more slowly than productivity," he said. "It's also clear the productivity increases are primarily benefiting profits."

Real compensation per hour for private business rose a meager 0.5 percent in 1994, the same rise as in 1993, Oswald said. However, unit non-labor payments, which include profits, capital consumption allowances, interest, rental income and indirect taxes, had much larger increases of 3.3 percent in 1994 and 1.7 percent in 1993.

Although real average weekly earnings rose an adjusted 1.2 percent from December to January, this was in large part due to a 0.9 percent increase in the number of hours worked. For the 12-month period, real average weekly earnings rose a scant 0.2 percent.

Profit per unit of output was up 13 percent in the third quarter compared with the same period in the preceding year, and 1993 experienced a profit boost of 14 percent.

Other reports showed the continuing decline of worker buying power. Total employment costs, for example, combining wages, salaries and benefits, rose a scant 3.0 percent last year, the smallest increase since their inclusion in the government's cost index began in 1981. Wages and salaries increased 2.8 percent, down from 3.1 percent in 1993.

These figures caused Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich to question how Americans can "possibly prepare for retirement" when their compensation is "going nowhere."

In addition, unit labor costs rose at the slowest pace in 30 years and hourly wage increases for non-farm workers were the lowest in 45 years, BLS reported. After adjusting for inflation, real hourly compensation in manufacturing actually went down 0.4 percent.

Using a newly redesigned survey procedure, the BLS also reports that real median weekly earnings for full-time workers, also adjusted for inflation, dropped 2.6 percent in 1994.

Women's pay in the fourth quarter was about 76 percent of the median for men. Unadjusted for inflation, the weekly median was $383 for African-Americans, $327 for Hispanics and $489 for white workers.

Meanwhile, a Census Bureau survey indicates that workers who left a full-time job between 1990 and 1992 suffered an average 23 percent drop in wages after securing new full-time work.

This implies that new jobs are "distinctly inferior to the ones they replaced," said Harvard University economist James Medoff, who has calculated that adjusted wages have fallen every year since 1982.

The Census report "suggests why people's anxiety is so high even now, when the economy is expanding," said Lawrence Mishel of the Economic Policy Institute.

In another report, the Census Bureau found that poverty in the United States is marked by "continuous changes in duration, intensity and frequency," with "considerable movement in and out of poverty."

The agency found, in a study of the period covering October 1989 through August 1992:

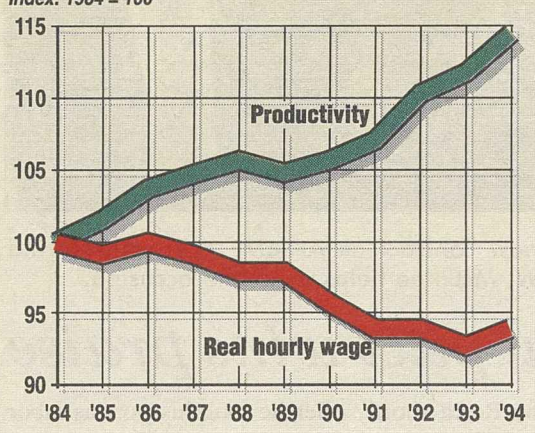
- Half of all poverty lasted longer than four months, and 13 percent lasted more than two years.
- One in five children were poor in an average 1990 month.
- African-Americans were three times as likely as whites to be poor. Nonetheless, the majority of poor persons were white.
- Persons in families headed by women were much more likely to be poor and for longer periods.

With the minimum wage falling farther behind the average hourly wage, Reich noted, a larger portion of working families are poor. "In the mid-1990s, some 11.5 percent of families working hard and playing by the rules still are trapped in poverty," he said. "We've fallen behind in our national goal to make work pay."

DATA

Workers don't share productivity gains

Productivity and real hourly wage, 1984-1994



The 2.3 percent rise in U.S. productivity in 1994 continues a steady advance in the measure of average output of a worker in an hour. But workers' buying power generally has been stagnant after a period of decline. Since January 1994, real hourly earnings have risen a paltry 0.2 percent.

Real Earnings	
January	+1.2 percent
From Jan. '94	+0.2 percent
From Jan. '84	-6.4 percent
Unemployment rate	
January	5.7 percent
From Dec. '94	+0.3 percent
Consumer Price Index (CPI-W)	
January	+0.4 percent
Jan. '94-Jan. '95	+2.9 percent
Producer Price Index	
January	+0.3 percent
Employment Cost Index	
Fourth Quarter 1994	+0.4 percent +3.0 percent

AFL-CIO NEWSGRAFIC

Jobless jump jumbles economic equation

The unemployment rate rose 0.3 percent to 5.7 percent in January, but that did not keep the Federal Reserve Bank from raising its interest rate for the seventh time in 12 months, leaving it at a level twice as high as a year ago.

The jump in the jobless rate "raises questions about whether this economic recovery is strong enough to provide an adequate number of good jobs for Americans," said AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland.

"The numbers show that, with interest rates having doubled over the past year, too many employers are refusing to take on new workers," he said.

Overtime in manufacturing was up to a new high of 4.9 hours per week, also reflecting the reluctance of managers to expand their payrolls. In the auto and steel industries, the workweek is averaging a very high 46 hours.

"You can speculate that this recovery is different than others," said Wayne Shelly of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. "Employers are adding hours rather than hiring more people."

In a sign of the times, the Boeing Co. said it expects to cut about 6,500 jobs in Washington state during the coming year, as well as 800 jobs in Philadelphia and 500 jobs in Wichita.

"With nearly every airplane order, we have seen more work go overseas to supposedly entice companies into buying Boeing planes," said Bill Johnson, president of Machinists District Lodge 751. Foreign trade should not be "at the expense of American workers and American jobs," he said.

The official unemployment count went up from 7.2 million to 7.5 million in January. However, "if you add 4.7 million workers who are working part time for economic reasons and 1.8 million discouraged workers, there are 14 million workers suffering unemployment, underemployment and reduced income," noted AFL-CIO economist Markley Roberts.

> *"You can speculate that this recovery is different than others. Employers are adding hours rather than hiring more people."*
>
> — Wayne Shelly
> Bureau of Labor Statistics

"Yet the Federal Reserve Board continues to say that inflation is just around the corner because unemployment is too low," Kirkland added. "This policy just doesn't make sense."

While 6.9 million jobs have been created in the 46 months since the trough of the last recession, that performance lags far behind previous recoveries. At the same point following the 1975 recession, 12.3 million jobs were added, and after the 1982 recession, 11.1 million jobs.

The increase in jobless adult men mirrored the overall rate, moving from 5.4 percent in December to 5.7 percent in January. The rate for adult women worsened from 4.7 percent to 4.9 percent.

Unemployment among African-Americans also deteriorated, changing from 9.8 percent to 10.2 percent. There was a substantial change for Hispanic workers as the jobless rate went from 9.2 percent to 10.2 percent.

Only teenage unemployment improved somewhat, going from 17.2 percent to 16.7 percent. For African-American teenagers however, the picture worsened from 34.6 percent to 35.5 percent.

Among large industrial states, the unemployment rate for California was 8.2 percent; New Jersey, 7.2 percent; New York, 6.0 percent; Ohio, 4.0 percent; and Pennsylvania, 5.9 percent.

— David Kameras

Consumer, producer prices show inflation meek

The Consumer Price Index (CPI-W) increased 0.4 percent in January, 0.3 percent after seasonal adjustment. For the year, the increase was 2.9 percent.

Bigger price increases were recorded in apparel, transportation, housing and entertainment. Food and beverage prices declined somewhat.

Finished goods prices rose a moderate 0.3 percent for the month. However, with wastepaper prices 217 percent higher than a year ago and metal scrap price increases in the double digits, including 87.6 percent for aluminum base scrap, some may see signs of inflation on the horizon.

In another positive economic report, the manufacturing sector showed continued strength as new factory orders rose 1.7 percent in December. The increase for all of 1994 was a robust 10.2 percent.

The end-of-the-year boost on the order books was the ninth in 1994 and the 14th in the last 17 months.

Transportation equipment continued to be a major source of orders, rising 6 percent after a 12.1 percent leap in November. Strong showings were also made in manufactured durable goods (up 1.5 percent), primary metals (up 5.7 percent), electronic and other electrical equipment (up 3.2 percent) and instruments and related products (up 3.2 percent).

Inventories rose for the 10th time of the year.

UNION NEWS

Card interest rates rise

Recent increases in interest rates by the Federal Reserve Board have forced several Union Privilege programs to change their rates.

Effective Feb. 1, the new rate on personal loans through the Loan Program is 14.75 percent, up from 13.25 percent. Effective Jan. 15, the new rate on the no-annual-fee Union MasterCard is 13.5 percent, up from 12.75 percent.

Union coalition wins battle

A decision by U.S. Bankruptcy Judge John Ryan placed a restraining order on public employee layoffs in Orange County until the county has bargained with the unions over implementation of a layoff policy.

The county should not look upon the judge's directive as a "short-term mandate to return to the collective bargaining process, but instead as a welcome opportunity to work together with county employees and their labor unions," said Bill Fogarty, executive secretary-treasurer of the Orange County AFL-CIO.

The nearly 200 workers who have received layoff notices thus far are to be considered on temporary rather than permanent layoff status.

Food Lion out of date

A survey by a consumer group found that supermarket giant Food Lion was cited by state inspectors more than 8,000 times for selling out-of-date products over a four-year period.

The survey by Consumers United with Employees revealed that between 1989 and 1993, the company received 8,866 citations in six states for selling outdated products like medicines, dairy items and infant formula.

The report showed that almost 3,400 of the violations came after a November 1992 ABC-TV exposé of unsanitary and unsafe food handling at Food Lion stores.

"Such findings warrant immediate and urgent attention by consumers, the Food and Drug Administration, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, state inspection agencies and Food Lion management," said Robert F. Harbrant, president of the AFL-CIO Food and Allied Service Trades Department.

FLSA ruling nets $80 million

The Government Employees won an $80 million settlement from the Immigration and Naturalization Service, which violated the Fair Labor Standards Act by denying overtime to 1,500 criminal investigators over the last 10 years.

The agreement is the largest known FLSA settlement in the federal sector.

The criminal investigators are scheduled to receive their first payment totaling some $30 million in the next few months, with annual payments thereafter for the next six years.

Mortgage options added

Union Member Mortgage and Real Estate has introduced two options to increase union members' home-buying chances.

The first, offered in cooperation with Fannie Mae, allows a qualified borrower to make only a 3 percent down payment from his or her own funds with a minimum one-month cash savings reserve requirement. This leaves 401(k) and monetary gifts available for closing costs.

The Mobile Home Affordability Benefit features a 5 percent down payment, no minimum loan amount, a one-month reserve requirement and higher debt-to-income ratios. Loans are limited to double-wide mobile homes that meet specific requirements. Both programs are open only to first-time buyers.

Plumbers boost training

Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 290 opened a new 65,000-square-foot training complex in Portland, Ore.

"The emphasis on training is absolutely essential to our success," said Marvin J. Boede. "This is an investment in the future that will be returned again and again into the next century."

The center is also equipped with a state-of-the-art computer room made possible by a $180,000 grant from the international.

States fight to preserve wages

Workers in Arkansas and Montana turned back Republican efforts to kill prevailing wage laws, the states' "Little Davis-Bacon Acts," while those in Indiana face a plethora of anti-worker initiatives.

These are only three of the states where Republicans are taking advantage of gains in state legislatures in the November elections to attack worker rights. High on the GOP agenda are repealing prevailing wage laws, undercutting workers' compensation protections and enacting so-called "right-to-work" laws.

In Indiana, the Republican-controlled state House ignored a rally of 5,000 workers and passed a bill that effectively repeals the prevailing wage law. The bill raises the base dollar level on projects from $25,000 to $250,000 and sets up a board to establish wages for all classifications on a county-by-county basis.

On the same day, the state Senate passed a "right-to-work" law for teachers and a House committee began considering a bill to weaken child labor laws.

"Like many other states, the Republicans here have their so-called contract with Indiana. I say it's a contract on Indiana," said Jerry Payne, secretary-treasurer of the state AFL-CIO.

Referring to the rally of 5,000 unionists, Payne quoted Harry Truman, who said: "Republicans can hear the whispers of business, but not the yells and screams of working people."

The Arkansas bill was killed in the House City, County and Local Affairs Committee Feb. 10 by a vote of 8-5, with seven not voting. The bill would have exempted public works construction projects of cities and counties from the minimum prevailing wage law. The state AFL-CIO had urged rejection of the bill to allow time for a newly appointed state advisory committee on prevailing wages to prepare its recommendations.

The Montana victory was the second for workers in this session. The state Senate on Feb. 13 rejected, 31-19, a measure similar to the one defeated in Arkansas. Even some of the bill's 28 sponsors did not vote for it when it came to the floor.

"They signed on the dotted line, but when they heard from folks back home, they wouldn't cast the killer vote," said Don Judge, executive secretary of the Montana AFL-CIO.

Earlier this session, Montana workers turned back a "right-to-work" bill. That bill was tabled in committee after hundreds of workers packed the Capitol.

NEWSMAKERS

Robert J. Connerton has announced his retirement as general counsel of the Laborers. Connerton came to LIUNA in 1953 as an associate general counsel and was named general counsel in 1964. For the past year, he has served on the National Labor Relations Advisory Board. Connerton will continue to practice law as the founding partner of Connerton, Ray & Simon.

President Clinton has picked **John T. Smith,** a special assistant to Steelworkers President **George Becker,** to be on the National Skills Standards Board. The board, composed of representatives from labor, business and education, addresses problems caused by the lack of connection between skills Americans need in the workplace and the skills they receive through education and training.

Karen Tramontano has been appointed head of government affairs for the Service Employees. Tramontano was the chief of staff and legal counsel to former Washington, D.C., Mayor Sharon Pratt Kelly.

Unions in Atlanta contributed the second highest amount of food during the **Atlanta Food Bank** holiday food drive, said Atlanta AFL-CIO President **Stewart Acuff**. Unionists and their families donated 6,400 pounds of food to the organization, which over the years has sustained the families of many strikers, including members of Graphic Communications Locals 8M and 96B and workers at Eastern Airlines.

DEATH

Philip E. Dooley, retired executive vice president for the Postal Workers, died in Virginia from amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also known as Lou Gehrig's Disease. He was 83.

Dooley, who began his career with the Postal Service in Miami, was vice president of the Florida chapter between 1962 and 1968 before becoming executive vice president of the union in 1974. He retired in 1976.

Survivors include his wife, Lucille Randall Dooley; two daughters, Sybil R. Burke and Sandra J. Voytek; son, David; and three grandchildren.

CORRECTION

Missing from the Convention Calendar Jan. 9 was the UAW, which will meet June 11-17 in Anaheim, Calif. An updated calendar will appear at mid-year.

Unions to join march marking voting rights

The AFL-CIO and many of its affiliated unions will join with civil rights groups in a march commemorating the 30th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act and drawing attention to current threats to voting rights.

The 54-mile march begins in Selma, Ala., on Sunday, March 5, climaxing with a rally at the Alabama State Capitol in Montgomery on Saturday, March 11. It will cover the same route as the famous 1965 march led by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., which was the catalyst for passage of the act.

The march will focus attention on efforts by the new conservative congressional majority to repeal the National Voter Registration Act of 1993, better known as the Motor Voter Act, and on court challenges to congressional districts drawn to further the election of minorities.

For information, contact Allegra McManus of the AFL-CIO Industrial Union Department at 202/842-7810.

RESOURCES

The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service has $1.25 million available in grants for joint labor-management committees and cooperative programs in 1995. Applications are available from FMCS, 2100 K St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20427. Applications, signed by labor and management representatives, must be postmarked by May 13.

CONFERENCE

A **National Conference for Union Representatives in the Health Care Industry** will be held at the Hyatt Regency Chicago March 12-14. The conference will focus on the impact of hospital restructuring on collective bargaining and health care unions. The conference is sponsored by the Labor Education Programs at Michigan State University and the University of Illinois in cooperation with AFSCME, Service Employees, Food and Commercial Workers, AFT and the Communications Workers. For more information, contact Ronald Peters at 217/333-0980.

PUBLICATION

An Offer You Can Refuse: An ILCA Guide to Stopping Phony "Labor" Papers is a new pamphlet produced by the AFL-CIO and the International Labor Communications Association. Copies are free. Contact the ILCA, 815 16th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

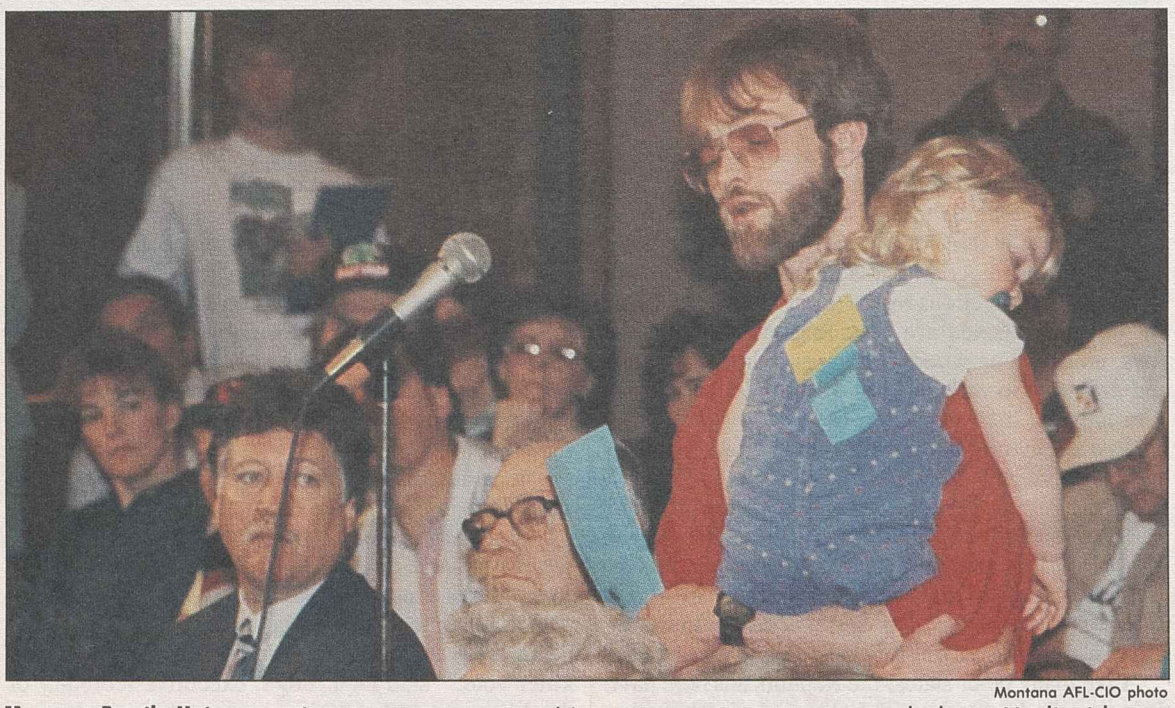
VIDEOS

Four new videotapes explain how to implement the Americans with Disabilities Act:

IAM Cares, a division of the Machinists, has produced two videos. **Hiring Individuals with Disabilities Can Be Good Business** is a 27-minute video complete with a training manual for employers. Copies are $129 plus $7.50 shipping and handling. To order call 800/224-0089. **Employment and the ADA: It's Your Opportunity** is a 29-minute video and reference guide for workers. Copies are $19.95 plus $4.50 shipping and handling. To order call 800/224-0129.

ADA: The Time to Understand is available from AFSCME, Research Department, 1625 L St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. The video costs $7.00.

Understanding the Americans with Disabilities Act, produced by the Eastern Paralyzed Veterans Association, explains in practical terms how businesses can make adjustments to accommodate the needs of disabled workers. The video is available for $39.95 from EPVA , 7520 Astoria Blvd., Jackson Heights, N.Y. 11370-1177; or call 718/803-EPVA.



Montana AFL-CIO photo

Montana Family Union member Bruce Barnes, with son Jacob, who suffers from juvenile diabetes, poses a question to panel about Medicaid at a "worker dialogue" on health care reform.

Connecting workers with workers

Union Privilege associate programs boost alliances

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

Unionists continue to reach out to communities through Union Privilege associate membership programs, bringing in new members and assisting in workers' battles for a better life.

The National Association of Working Americans, unveiled at the Union-Industries Show in Cincinnati five years ago, has helped to galvanize public support for important issues. More recent programs in Montana and El Paso, Texas, have enjoyed even more success.

"These programs have been everything we thought they would be," said Charles McDonald, president of Union Privilege. "They've become important institutions in their communities, a real bridge between union and non-union workers."

NAWA, with approximately 1,000 members, has continued to attract interest because it is organized around advocacy issue campaigns, said V. Daniel Radford, NAWA chairman and executive secretary-treasurer of the Cincinnati AFL-CIO.

"Our intent is to take individuals who know very little about unions but who understand the importance of collective action," said Radford. "NAWA has allowed them to build and work in the community and feel like they have an active role."

NAWA actually led the local campaign for congressional passage of the Family and Medical Leave Act, he said. The association also was active in the health care debate and is taking up the banner for an increase in the minimum wage.

Cincinnati, like many American cities, has been plagued by plant closings. NAWA gives area unions something to offer unemployed workers — a one-year paid membership with access to Union Privilege benefits, including low-interest credit cards, homebuyer programs and low-cost dental plans.

NAWA also is in the process of forming a job bank, which will help both union and non-union members track good jobs, not just the minimum-wage variety.

The Rio Grande Alliance in El Paso, in conjunction with the local AFL-CIO and Building Trades Council, is helping to inform workers about their rights. The campaign, funded by a $33,000 grant from Union Privilege, includes a series of television, radio and newspaper ads and a worker rights hotline.

The program has attracted some 2,200 members in just more than a year in operation, prompting both the city and county commissions to declare Nov. 15 through Dec. 15 of last year "Worker Rights Awareness" month, which included the right of all workers to bargain collectively.

The hotline has been especially successful, said Martha Sanchez, who noted that more than 150 phone calls have been taken since the program started. "We have even gotten 70 new members after assisting them with their problems."

"We want to help educate all workers — organized or unorganized," said Ernie Rodriguez, president of the El Paso AFL-CIO. "A lot of people work more than 40 hours, but don't get paid overtime. Many injured workers aren't being taken care of by workers' compensation."

To inform people of their rights, the ad campaign discusses job safety, discrimination, workers' compensation, sexual harassment and overtime pay. The ads generated so much interest that more than 200 workers attended a Worker Rights Awareness forum sponsored by the groups. Participants included unions as well as community and government organizations.

By providing a variety of Union Privilege benefits, the alliance also has been instrumental in several organizing drives, including Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Local 628 at the Cliff Inn and Sheet Metal Workers Local 49 at J and J, a heating and air conditioner manufacturer.

Prior to representation elections, information sessions were held to educate workers on the benefits available through the alliance, including notary services, death and dismemberment insurance, dental insurance, English-as-a-second-language classes and income tax assistance.

The alliance also helped nurses, social workers, garment workers and office clerks and others who seek a union on their job.

Assistance also is being rendered in state legislative battles over workers' compensation and prevailing wages. The alliance also is working with community agencies to sponsor homebuyer education workshops. In the event of hardship, the alliance works with the United Way to assist workers with food, rent and utility payments.

The Montana Family Union has been focused primarily on political education and activism, including the ongoing fight against so-called "right-to-work" laws.

"Our first step is to educate members and make them aware of the various attacks on worker rights," said Pam Egan, executive director of the 2,700-member MFU. "There are huge distances between many of our members, so sometime we have to use phone trees."

The MFU has held "worker dialogues" on national health care reform, budget proposals and hate groups. More than 500 people attended the dialogue on health care.

The success of the MFU to build coalitions with other community organizations representing seniors, minorities and the environment helped the labor movement beat back right-to-work legislation in a House committee.

The MFU led the fight against a sales tax two years ago, with 70 percent of the voters rejecting the measure. The public was so impressed with the fight against the initiative that the organization gained 300 new members. About 100 people also paid for scholarship memberships.

MFU also was successful in assisting the Montana Laborers district council in organizing workers at Golden Triangle Mental Health Association, a quasi-public agency. The attraction of the Union Privilege benefits to those white-collar workers has caused LIUNA to undertake two more organizing drives.

At the center of it all is education. A "worker rights curriculum" developed by the National Immigration Law Center will be hosted by the MFU, whose members will receive train-the-trainer sessions. The Rio Grande Alliance will receive the same training.

AFL-CIO NEWS

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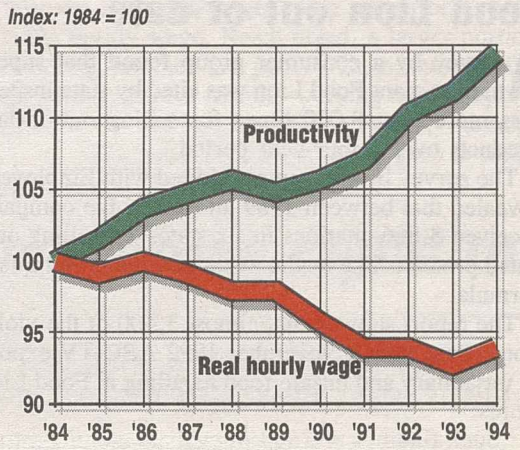
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AFL-CIO NEWS

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EXECUTIVE COUNCIL



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Labor counters attack on workers

Clinton fights scabs, promises vetoes

By Michael Byrne
Bal Harbour, Fla.

The AFL-CIO, drawing a line in the sand against congressional attacks on worker protections, was cheered by important new support from the Clinton administration.

Vice President Gore told the Executive Council that President Clinton planned to issue an executive order prohibiting federal contracts with companies that permanently replace strikers.

"We believe that companies that permanently replace their workers would not be able to produce the quality products that are needed," Gore said.

Gore also relayed Clinton's promise to veto "any effort to change Section 8(a)(2) (of the National Labor Relations Act), or any effort to repeal the Davis-Bacon or the Service Contract acts."

Attacks on the NLRA ban on company unions and on the two prevailing wage laws are part of a broad-scale search-and-destroy mission by employers and their congressional allies under the Republicans' so-called "Contract with America," which seeks to relax or end regulations on employers.

"Congressional leaders are moving to sharply curtail or eliminate a broad range of government programs that help ordinary people," AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland told a news conference. "And they promise to shower more money and license on the rich and powerful through widespread deregulation of business and tax cuts for the well-to-do."

Republicans wasted no time in trying to undermine the proposed Clinton executive order against scabs, attaching an amendment to a Labor Department appropriations bill that would bar funding for the initiative.

In a wide-ranging statement on the congressional assault on worker rights, the council pledged that "the American labor movement, which has struggled for more than a century to create clearings of civilization in the jungle of the marketplace, will vigorously oppose their efforts."



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

Vice President Gore, with Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich beside him, tells the Executive Council that President Clinton would forbid government contracts with employers that permanently replace strikers, and that he would veto any bill to weaken prevailing wage laws or to repeal the ban on company unions.

The council also approved an action plan to counter the congressional onslaught, beginning with a reorganization of the federation's political and legislative field operations and incorporating a new strategic communications plan designed to improve grass-roots activism **(See story at right)**.

The political battle that lies ahead was underscored

Continued on Page 9

Campaign Stands UP for working families

Bal Harbour, Fla.

The AFL-CIO launched a major campaign to "Stand UP" for good jobs, good wages, worker protections and the right to representation.

Within those four categories, the federation will take its case for various specific initiatives — from a minimum wage increase to job safety and health — directly to the American people through grass-roots activism and a coordinated communications plan.

The campaign, launched by the Executive Council at its mid-winter meeting here, includes a reorganization and expansion of field staff activity, as well as revitalized communications within the labor movement and through the general public media.

The program was outlined to the council by Peggy Taylor, Richard Walsh and Rex Hardesty, directors of the Legislative, COPE and Information departments, respectively. It grew out of two specific reviews — polling and focus groups on public attitudes about the labor movement, and staff recommendations in the wake of the 1994 election.

The election, which routed many endorsed candidates despite an intense effort by COPE, suggested that more must be done before the final two months, when COPE traditionally gears up its persuasion and get-out-the-vote effort, Walsh said.

Walsh said affiliated unions helped put some 281 extra people in the field for the coordinated campaign in 1994. "But those people brought back some key lessons: we need to communicate better all year round, and we need the help of affiliated unions to communicate with their locals, also all year round."

To facilitate that year-round communication, COPE regional directors will serve as "field generals for Legislative Action Committees," Walsh said. "They will make sure that meetings are scheduled and that the reports are carried through. And they will coordinate the effort where there are no LACs."

Continued on Page 9

UNITE: Historic merger puts 'needletrades' under one banner

By Muriel H. Cooper

Two of America's most storied unions will join forces when the Ladies' Garment Workers and the Clothing and Textile Workers merge to form UNITE, the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees.

The merger was approved initially by the two unions' executive boards on Feb. 16 and will be final if ratified at separate union conventions in June. Under the agreement, Jay Mazur of the ILGWU would be the first UNITE president.

"We have common roots, both begun by Jewish immigrants from Europe who, instead of finding streets paved with gold, found sweatshops and deplorable conditions for workers," said ACTWU President Jack Sheinkman. He will retire from the union while continuing to serve as Chairman of the Board of the Amalgamated Bank of New York, the only union-owned bank in the country.

Mazur, appearing with Sheinkman at a news conference in Bal Harbour, Fla., to announce the merger, called UNITE a union that "will be more powerful than the sum of its parts."

The rich history of America's two major "needletrades" unions has been one of defending and advancing workers — in the United States and elsewhere — who are particularly subject to abuse: women, immigrants, minorities and low-wage workers.

Both unions were in the forefront of fights for the eight-hour day, the 40-hour week and the elimination of sweatshops and child labor. Their activism helped bring about national unemployment insurance and the minimum wage.

And each union contributed leaders who were among the biggest names in labor history — giants like David Dubinsky of ILGWU and Sidney Hillman of ACTWU.

Recently, the unions negotiated a Code of Conduct with the Clothing

Continued on Page 16



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

Ladies' Garment Workers President Jay Mazur and Clothing and Textile Workers President Jack Sheinkman announce plans for the two venerable trade unions to merge.

'Right to work' down, but not out in Oklahoma

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

Union activists turned back so-called "right to work" in legislative committees in New Mexico and Oklahoma, but then saw the issue re-emerge in a different version in Oklahoma.

Joseph Shantz, director of AFL-CIO Organization and Field Services, cautioned that the Oklahoma actions are only the first steps in what is sure to be a protracted battle.

The New Mexico vote, following similar legislative committee actions in Montana and New Hampshire, left state AFL-CIOs at 3-0 against the National Right-to-Work Committee, which came into the 1995 legislative sessions with high ambitions because of the conservative bent of the 1994 elections.

In Oklahoma — in a legislature where veterans are very familiar with ''right to work'' — the problem for trade unionists remains the commitment of the newly elected Republican governor to pass such a bill.

A strict right-to-work bill failed 8-5 in the House Commerce, Industry and Labor Committee Feb. 23 on a vote that followed party lines, with Democrats holding the edge. It came in front of a standing-room-only crowd of trade unionists from across the state.

But on March 1, an amendment to another bill that proposed putting the question on the ballot in an October special election was overwhelmingly approved.

In the committee vote, the opposition was led by Tulsa Democratic Reps. Don Ross, Russ Roach and Gary Stottlemyre. Ross noted that the average worker's salary is $2,000 less in neighboring states with right-to-work laws.

In New Mexico, the legislation was tabled by a 4-1 vote in the House Labor and Human Resources Committee, Shantz reported to the AFL-CIO Executive Council in its midwinter meeting. Legislation in the Senate is still pending.

''The 1995 sessions of state legislatures have shown the greatest increase in right-to-work activity in more than a decade,'' Shantz said. ''In any state that right to work is judged as threatening, the AFL-CIO has committed appropriate financial resources and staff,'' he said. ''So far, so good.''

The targets for the national right-to-work group are easy to identify. In the vast western area between the states that border on the Mississippi River and those that border on the Pacific Ocean, only Montana, Colorado, New Mexico and Oklahoma are free-bargaining states. Each of those states has suffered its share of struggles to avoid right-to-work passage.

In addition to those four obvious targets, Shantz reported that campaigns have been seen this year in Maryland, Michigan, Oregon, Rhode Island and Washington. Even two states that already ban union security clauses, Kansas and Idaho, have proposals to make them worse.

The Kansas proposal is to require unions to secure annual dues checkoff authorization for union members. No hearings have been scheduled.

The measure introduced in Idaho would apply the state's right-to-work law to public employees. The same law was introduced in 1990, Shantz noted, but then-Gov. Cecil Andrus vetoed it. Republican Gov. Phil Batt, an original sponsor of right-to-work legislation, has stated he will sign the bill. No hearings have been scheduled.

Republicans gained seats in Maryland and immediately introduced right-to-work legislation in the House. But the legislation was assigned to the House Economic Matters Committee, where Democrats have a 16 to 7 majority, said Shantz.

In Oregon, petitions are being circulated to get on the 1996 ballot a proposal to enact right to work for public employees. The same initiative failed to gather enough signatures to go on the 1994 ballot, Shantz noted.

To help educate the public on the impact of right-to-work laws, the AFL-CIO has issued ''What's Wrong with Right-to-Work: A Tale of Two Nations,'' with statistics on right-to-work states.

Workers in free-bargaining states, for example, make on average $4,343 more than workers in right-to-work states. Of the 20 states with the highest level of their population in poverty, 12 are right-to-work states.

Copies of the report are available from the AFL-CIO Department of Reproduction and Mailings, 815 16th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

ORGANIZING

Hospital workers go IUOE

Skilled maintenance workers at Long Island College Hospital who have been thwarted for more than 30 years in their efforts to gain a contract voted for representation by the Operating Engineers.

The workers voted 36-26 for IUOE in a Feb. 24 National Labor Relations Board election after the Service Employees withdrew from the election to avoid splitting the ticket and giving a victory to the hospital.

SEIU Local 144 had represented the workers, but the hospital fought for 30 years in the NLRB and in the courts to avoid bargaining.

IUOE Local 30 has begun to identify bargaining issues and has urged the hospital to talk.

IUE makes inroads

Workers at the Exide Battery plant in Sumter, S.C., voted Feb. 23 to be represented by the Electronic Workers, in what the local media identified as the first big union victory in the region since World War II.

The campaign that produced the 197-183 vote was ''one of the hardest-fought campaigns in my 30-year career,'' said IUE organizer Garney Browning, who accused the company of vicious anti-union tactics.

The workers approached the union because of poor management and ''atrocious'' working conditions. The company distributed anti-union leaflets and intimidated the workers with the prospect of a strike, Browning said.

False arrest doesn't foil union win

By Muriel H. Cooper

A Clothing and Textile Workers organizer, wrongfully arrested on the eve of a representation election vote, is taking his persecutors to court.

Richard Womack Jr. is suing Autoliv Inc. of Indianapolis, FBI officials in the town and the Marion County Sheriff's Department for wrongful arrest and civil rights violations.

Womack, son of AFL-CIO Civil Rights Director Richard Womack Sr., was in Indianapolis to organize workers at Autoliv, which manufactures seat belts.

Minutes after he had checked into his hotel room on Dec. 19, Womack found himself facing a sheriff's deputy aiming a gun at him. ''You are a suspect for armed bank robbery,'' said the officer.

Over the next 18 hours, Womack was arrested, handcuffed, photographed, hauled before witnesses and thrown in the Marion County Jail for the night. He was further vilified the next day in a front-page article in the Indianapolis Star, which indicated that Womack came to town not to organize workers, but instead to rob the Union Federal Savings Bank.

''I told them to look at the bank videotape or check the hotel records,'' said Womack, who was in the hotel at the time of the robbery. ''Dye exploded on the robber and I didn't have any dye on me. The robber was cleanshaven.'' Womack wears a beard.

''They said the only rights I have is to tell them where the money and gun were.''

Meanwhile, Autoliv bought 300 newspapers and distributed them to the workers with the hope that it would discourage them from voting for representation. But workers voted 158-77 for the union.

ACTWU President Jack Sheinkman called Womack's arrest a ''setup'' to publicly malign the union and adversely affect the campaign. ''We will leave no stone unturned, including legal action against all parties who were complicit in bringing to public attention this horrendous charge,'' said Sheinkman.



Indianapolis Star

ACTWU organizer Richard Womack Jr., right, in Indianapolis with his father, AFL-CIO Civil Rights Director Richard Womack Sr.

''I feel the company and sheriff were in cahoots because the company hired off-duty sheriffs to act as security guards during the campaign,'' said Womack.

Womack said although the FBI agents apologized afterwards, he is still traumatized by the event. ''I thought I didn't stand a chance,'' he said. ''I was very scared. You are always hearing about people who are wrongfully arrested and spend years trying to get out. All I could do was put it in the Lord's hands.''

The best thing that came out of the ordeal, Womack said, was ''the workers will now have protection and rights by voting for the union.''

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Director of Information: Rex Hardesty

Editor: Michael Byrne

Assistant Editors: Candice Johnson, David Kameras, James B. Parks

Staff Writers: Muriel H. Cooper, Mike Hall, Colleen M. O'Neill, Sharolyn A. Rosier

Graphics/layout: Stan Hitt

AFL-CIO Headquarters: 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006
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CAPITOL DIGEST

Protesting the gagging of Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich and calling the Republican-led process to gut America's wage laws a ''sham,'' House Democrats angrily walked out of a scheduled markup of bills to repeal the Davis-Bacon and Service Contract acts.

They were joined by more than 100 members of various building and construction trades unions, who had packed the hearing room to show their support for the prevailing wage laws.

Rep. Cass Ballenger (R-N.C.), chairman of the Economic and Educational Opportunities subcommittee on work force protection, told opponents of the repeal bills, H.R. 500 and H.R. 246, to limit their witnesses to either the Department of Labor or unions at the hearing earlier this month, but not both. Ballenger would not budge and union presidents testified while the DOL was forced to submit a written statement.

''Testimony from the Department of Labor should be an important ingredient in congressional consideration of these issues,'' Reich said. Long-time congressional observers noted that during the Reagan and Bush administrations, the Democratically controlled Congress and committees never forbade government agencies from testifying.

The protest could not prevent the markup from going forward, however. Republicans have changed longstanding House rules that required at least one committee member from the minority to be present in order to make up a quorum.

With only GOP members present, the subcommittee quickly reported out the bills, which could result in wage cuts for tens of thousands of construction and service workers on federally funded projects.

While strongly opposing repeal, the AFL-CIO is supporting legislation to reform and modernize the act. H.R. 967 would increase the construction and rehabilitation threshold to higher levels and eliminate 75 percent of the paperwork burden on employers required for employer payroll reporting, two areas in which critics have called for changes. The subcommittee did not act on that measure.

Elsewhere on Capitol Hill:

RESCISSIONS — Though spending for fiscal 1995 was approved by the last Congress, Republicans continued their attack on key government programs with a $17 billion rescission package. Housing programs took the biggest cut. Low-income, elderly Americans also would be severely affected by the rescissions.

The Department of Labor had $2.9 billion taken from its budget. A portion of that money had been earmarked for its enforcement staff, including OSHA inspectors and enforcement officers. Some $2.4 million was snatched back from the Wage and Hour Division, which monitors Davis-Bacon compliance.

Other programs from which funding was cut include fuel assistance to help the elderly and poor with high winter heating bills, a program to help poor older workers find part-time community service jobs, a program that helps all senior citizens from being victimized by so-called ''medi-gap'' insurance scams, medical equipment and facilities improvement at VA hospitals, prenatal care for mothers, supplemental food programs for expectant mothers and newborns, and programs for summer jobs, youth job training, Job Corps and school-to-work.

The full House is expected to vote on the package in early March.

WELFARE REFORM — Under the Republican welfare reform plan, current public-sector workers could find their jobs in jeopardy, since nothing would prevent some government agencies from using welfare recipients, making the minimum wage or less, to take the jobs of full-time workers with decent pay and benefits.

An amendment to add language in the bill to prevent such a scenario was voted down by the House Ways and Means subcommittee on human resources when it marked up the bill, H.R. 4. Later the full Ways and Means committee failed to approve the amendment by a 17-17 vote.

— Compiled by Mike Hall



Marianne Keffer Zweig/Page One Photography

Peg Seminario, the AFL-CIO's safety and health director, addresses a Capitol Hill press conference surrounded by workers who have been helped by vigorous OSHA enforcement.

OSHA under broad-scale attack

Workers attest to importance of protections

By Colleen M. O'Neill

Labor is trying to bar the door against a frenzied rush to deregulate American commerce, which poses an increasing threat to workers' health and safety on the job.

The new Republican congressional leadership is using a multipronged legislative approach that would tear down the federal government's regulatory system and roll back years of progress in protecting health, safety and the environment.

Protections provided by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration are a particular target of several proposals. Already, a House appropriations subcommittee has approved a $16 million cut in OSHA appropriations for the current year, with additional cuts expected.

To respond to the challenge, the AFL-CIO campaign for health and safety has entered a new phase, said Communications Workers President Morton Bahr, the chairman of the federation's safety and occupational health committee, in a report to the Executive Council.

''The campaign — 'Stand UP for Health and Safety. It's the Fight of Our Lives' — will focus on generating grass-roots activities in workplaces and communities to expose and counter the Republican assault,'' Bahr said. The effort will include ads, a flier, postcards, petitions, sample op-eds and letters to the editor and scripts for radio spots, he said.

Other materials, including fact sheets on the Republican proposals, talking points and other background information on OSHA and safety and health, will be available shortly, Bahr said.

One of the campaign's first events in the fight to keep OSHA strong was held in Washington. Nine workers from around the country came to the nation's capital to tell reporters and members of Congress the ways in which they and their workplaces benefited by OSHA rules and interventions — and merely by its existence.

''Through OSHA's appearance at the plant, workers developed a sense of security and hope,'' said Charles Bridgemon, Service Employees Local 109 president who witnessed a double fatality in his North Chicago workplace. ''Workers felt that no matter what problems or unsafe conditions were uncovered, OSHA would ensure that it would be taken care of as soon as possible.

''As a result of OSHA's investigation and settlement with North Chicago Refiners and Smelters, we all benefited by the mandating of extensive training programs to prevent such an accident from happening again,'' he said.

''Although OSHA never inspected our workplace, the fact that they *could* has helped us get our employer to comply with the law and make Majestic Shapes a safer place to work,'' said Jorges Deschamps, a Ladies' Garment Worker from a shoulder pad factory in the Bronx, N.Y. ''Without that threat, he simply wouldn't think safety was important.''

Rep. Nita M. Lowey (D-N.Y.) joined the workers in calling for a commitment to continued funding and resources for the federal job safety agency.

''The American people don't want to go back to the 19th century,'' she said. ''We have a responsibility to protect the public health and safety, and OSHA is critical to our ability to do so. . . . Americans should not have to take their lives in their hands to earn a living and support their families.''

Two major anti-regulatory measures are being advanced by House Republicans: The Regulatory Transition Act (H.R. 450 and S. 219) and the inaptly named Job Creation and Wage Enhancement Act (H.R. 9 and S. 343).

The former measure would put in place a moratorium on regulations through the end of the year, retroactive to Nov. 20, 1994, and was passed by the House Feb. 24 by a vote of 276-14.

The Senate marked up its much narrower version of the legislation Feb. 28. That measure would apply only to rules with an economic impact greater than $100 million.

The ''job creation'' legislation — part of the Republicans' ''Contract with America'' — would make it much more difficult for the government to issue safeguards while giving new rights to regulated businesses at the expense of protecting workers and the public.

Specifically, it would:

- Require extensive risk assessments and cost-benefit analyses for safety, health and environmental rules.
- Allow representatives of regulated businesses to sit on peer review panels and judge the scientific basis of proposed and final rules.
- Give extensive new rights to regulated parties to challenge rules or enforcement actions and to be compensated for a greater than 10 percent property value reduction.
- Set a cap on the total cost of rules that could be imposed on the private sector.
- Give the Office of Management and Budget much broader authority to review and disapprove rules deemed to create unnecessary paperwork burdens.

The House was expected to take up three bills containing portions of H.R. 9 during the week of Feb. 27, while the Senate is in the midst of hearings on its version.

The AFL-CIO characterized the proposals as ''ill-conceived, unworkable measures that would create chaos and leave the public and workers without important protections.''

Also under consideration by the Republican-led Congress is paperwork reduction legislation and measures on unfunded mandates, as well as those on OSHA ''reform.''

Common sense tips balance on budget vote

By David Kameras and Michael Byrne

The courageous stand of North Dakota's two Democratic senators helped derail the proposed constitutional amendment to balance the budget, but the narrow victory portends more tough fights ahead.

The Republican majority's refusal to specifically exempt Social Security and other retirement programs from the budget ax tipped the balance against the ill-advised proposal, which "would have crippled government's ability to fight recessions or otherwise maintain economic stability," AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland said.

However, the battle is far from over. Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole (R-Kan.) planned to bring the legislation up again, and pressure on Democrats to change their vote is expected to increase as the next election gets nearer. That makes even more essential labor's effort to warn Americans of the dangers of a bill that sounds so appealing on its surface.

Few know that better than AFSCME President Gerald W. McEntee, who for a decade as chair of the federation's constitution amendment subcommittee has been quizzing policy-makers visiting the AFL-CIO Executive Council's mid-winter meeting about the economic and political wisdom of what has been called both a straitjacket and a sledgehammer.

"This is one of (House Speaker) Newt Gingrich's main topics," McEntee reminded Vice President Gore during the meeting this year. He urged the White House to help round up the last couple of key votes in the Senate and "stop the roll of the contract," the Republicans' so-called "Contract with America."

North Dakota Sens. Kent Conrad and Byron Dorgan were on that short list of wavering Democrats that Gore and Senate Minority Leader Thomas Daschle (D-S.D.) assured the council would hear further reasons why the United States should not burden its constitution with a mandate to balance the budget. Sen. Robert Byrd (D-Va.) led the effort to line up the votes.

"A lot of people are running scared from this thing," Gore said, "because polls show a majority of the American people for it. We need to make our arguments in a way that changes people's minds."

A balanced budget amendment could be a massive job killer, according to a report to the council by the Economic Research Department, which spelled out both the dire consequences and potential alternatives to fiscal discipline.

The forced cuts would hurt middle-class and low-income families, weaken state and local governments and throw the nation into a recession, the report said. A constitutional amendment would "put public policy makers in a fiscal straitjacket and make it impossible to deal with recessions with necessary programs to stimulate the economy and to create jobs."

Hardest hit would be Medicare, Medicaid, unemployment insurance benefits and other social insurance programs, possibly including Social Security. Republicans have refused to specify the cuts.

"Massive job loss and income loss would take place in infrastructure construction, housing, job training, education, health care, retiree benefits and more," the report said. "The amendment would mean cuts in the Head Start program for children; fewer guaranteed and direct student loans for college students; children shut out of compensatory education; and closed veterans' hospitals, community health centers, clinics and nursing homes.

The United States can move toward a balanced budget without burdening the constitution, the AFL-CIO report noted, offering an alternative "honest approach to balancing the federal budget with a fair, realistic tax reform. It listed steps that would raise $88 billion in additional federal revenues:

- Change the foreign tax credit to a deduction.
- Eliminate deferral of income from controlled foreign corporations.
- Crack down on transfer pricing abuse by multinational corporations.
- Stop misclassification of employees as "independent contractors."
- Tax corporate income at a 35 percent rate.
- Amortize a portion of advertising costs.
- Limit mortgage interest deductions for mansions.
- Tax capital gains at the same rate as ordinary income.
- Tax unrealized capital gains at death.

In addition, the economy should aim toward a goal of full employment, the AFL-CIO said. To that end, spending should be targeted at job-producing investments, including infrastructure programs for highways and other public works, and training and educating the work force to compete in the new international economy.

JOB SAFETY

Ergonomics rule drafted

OSHA plans to circulate draft copies of its eagerly awaited ergonomics rule to various interest groups in late March, the agency said.

Comments on the proposal would be sought from representatives of industry, labor and professional associations, an agency spokeswoman said, and work would continue on drafting a standard.

OSHA since 1990 has been working on an ergonomics standard — a rule that would help curb the fastest-growing category of injury and illness in America's workplaces. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, repetitive strain injuries account for more than 65 percent of all illnesses reported in 1994. These illnesses have increased by 770 percent in the past decade.

Asbestos compliance put off

Employers now have until July 10 to comply with all but one exposure limit under OSHA's new asbestos standards for general industry, construction and shipyards.

Provisions covering medical surveillance, respiratory protection, employee training and engineering control requirements previously had start-up dates between Jan. 9, 1995, to April 10, 1995 — all are now set to go into effect in July. The limit of 0.1 fibers per cubic centimeter, which took effect Oct. 11, 1994, remains in effect.

During the delay, requirements of OSHA's pre-existing asbestos standards dating from 1986 are in effect. The agency plans to publish corrections and clarifications to the standard as well as various compliance and training materials before July.

Fines cut for BE&K

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the infamous union-busting BE&K Construction Co. have reached agreement on pending citations that cut the fines from a proposed $560,000 to a mere $10,000.

OSHA had cited the company for violations of its record-keeping requirements, which the agency says help identify and abate job hazards. At the request of the Carpenters, the agency investigated company injury and illness records for jobs in International Falls, Minn., Canton, N.C., Dublin, Ga., and Mobile, Ala.

Labor vows to protect Social Security

By Colleen M. O'Neill

Citing the strengths and advantages of the government's retirement income program, the AFL-CIO vowed to work vigorously to defend the Social Security system from those who would dismantle it.

"Social Security is the foundation of retirement income for working Americans," the Executive Council said at its meeting in Bal Harbour, Fla. "It is also the primary source of health care for the elderly and the principal insurance against family impoverishment due to death or disability."

Employer contributions to pension plans have been stagnant over the past decade, Machinists President George Kourpias noted in the report of the AFL-CIO Social Security Committee to the council. "The downward push on wages and the rapidly escalating costs of health care have combined to eat up money that was going to pension plan improvements in the 1960s and the 1970s."

As a result, retirees rely on Social Security to a much greater extent than in the past. Fifteen years ago, 45 percent of retirement income for average wage earners came from Social Security; the current figure is 57 percent.

The council noted the efficiency of Social Security, with administrative costs of less than 1 percent of benefits paid, and the central role it plays in providing economic security to working American families.

The potential drain on surplus funds expected in 20 to 30 years as the members of the baby boom generation retire can be solved "in the same way it has been solved in years past — through modest adjustments in the premium and benefit structure," the council said.

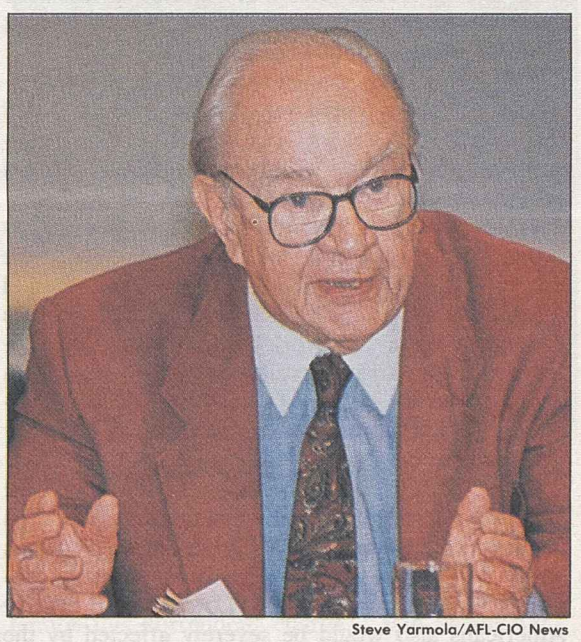
The council stated its opposition to reducing benefits, extending the retirement age, proposed personnel cuts at the Social Security Administration and attempts to privatize the system or means-test benefits.

Robert Ball, the former head of the Social Security Board who served, along with AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland, on the 1983 commission on Social Security reform, warned the council that Social Security and Medicare are under political attack.

"It's hard to believe, with politicians falling all over themselves to say they won't cut it. . . . but it might be back on the table at just the time the constitutional amendment to balance the budget would be in effect, if it passes," he said.

Ball said the opponents would be able to take advantage of the projected long-range deficit to stir up grass-roots support for change. He noted several proposals, such as changing the system to a welfare program from a social insurance program by imposing income limits, or cutting Social Security benefits up to 40 percent and substituting a savings plan.

Ball urged educational efforts to get people to understand the great importance of Social Security as a social insurance program.



Steve Yarmola/AFL-CIO News

"It's not just giving to workers in the future, but it provides current protection for families."

— Robert Ball

"Without Social Security, there would be no choice but for older families to move in with younger families; for millions more, you would have each month the rather unpleasant task of sitting down and deciding how much this month we can afford to give to which parent," Ball said.

"It's not just giving to workers in the future, but it provides current protection for families," he said. Social Security is "wage-earners getting together to pay the average amount of support needed by dependents or disabled people. . . it's protection of every family member."

The AFL-CIO has joined with the American Association of Retired Persons and the National Council of Senior Citizens in a cooperative program to educate the public and defend the Social Security system, said Kourpias, who distributed a draft brochure that will be used to solicit telephone calls and letters to members of Congress.

The brochure stands on its own, Kourpias noted, but also will be available for union publications. In addition, a pocket-sized handbook and background paper are in the works, he said.

Organizing role of federation to be examined

New committee marks uptick of crucial activity

By Muriel H. Cooper

Stuck with antiquated labor laws and a hostile political climate, labor will examine its own devices to bring in new membership.

"Organizing is the lifeblood of the labor movement and we must put deeds behind those words," declared AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland as he appointed a new committee to consider what additional role the federation could play in organizing.

That ad hoc committee, chaired by Graphic Communications President James J. Norton, will "take stock of the range of possibilities to see what part of our programs are carrying their own weight and which are not," Kirkland told the Executive Council.

Appointed to serve on the committee are Electrical Workers President John J. Barry, Service Employees President John H. Sweeney, Food and Commercial Workers President Douglas H. Dority, Electronic Workers Vice President Gloria Johnson and Machinists President George Kourpias.

Noting that organizing cuts across union lines, Kirkland urged all affiliates to "participate in this process. I am asking them to take the opportunity to present views or sit in on any of the discussions about the federation's role in organizing."

Organizing traditionally has been the purview of affiliated unions and the federation's role "is one of service, backup and assistance," Kirkland told a news conference. "But we are perfectly prepared to expand it and extend it."

One of the most significant expansions of the AFL-CIO organizing service occurred in 1989 with the creation of the Organizing Institute, which has trained some 400 union organizers since its inception. The program "has proven itself," Kirkland said, and its budget has more than doubled over the past two years, to $2.5 million.

Affiliates also have taken advantage of special benefits available through the federation's Union Privilege program, "particularly in terms of internal organizing, where they have the formal recognition and certification and the obligation to represent, but have a lot of free riders."

A variety of associate membership programs have been developed using the Union Privilege benefits, including the California Immigrant Workers Association and the Rio Grande Alliance in El Paso, Texas, which have helped unions organize Hispanic workers.

Another coordinated organizing program is being developed in Southern California to assist factory workers, many of whom are minorities, reported Service Employees President John J. Sweeney, chair of the AFL-CIO Organizing Committee.

The Los Angeles/Orange County Organizing Committee will coordinate a joint project by the Carpenters, Ladies' Garment Workers, Machinists, Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers, Steelworkers, Teamsters and the Food and Commercial Workers to target specific industries in the area.

"The potential of this initiative, known as the Los Angeles Manufacturing Action Project (LAMAP), is over 700,000 workers, half of whom are Latino or Asian-Pacific," Sweeney said.

The Department of Organization and Field Services also plans to start two areawide organizing projects in cooperation with state or local labor councils.

In addition, the department is preparing to expand its ability to communicate information on its computerized tracking system of National Labor Relations Board cases, and other organizing resources, through a new on-line service.

"The system will allow for two-way communication 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and will be the first national linkage of all organizers from all affiliates," said Sweeney.

The NLRB tracking service, in operation for a little more than a year, gives national organizing directors weekly updated information on all recognition

Continued on Page 16



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland said labor would make every effort to defeat the so-called TEAM Act, which is disguised as a means for labor and management to work together, but actually would lift the longstanding ban on employer-dominated puppet unions. "Representatives and senators must be persuaded that this is an issue of fundamental importance to our members," he said.

Company union fight enjoined

Veto promise no guarantee of worker protections

By James B. Parks

Promises of a presidential veto have lifted the spirits but not eased the intensity of the campaign to prevent Congress from reviving the sham company unions that thrived in the 1920s and 1930s.

Members of Legislative Action Committees across the country are meeting with members of two key committees — House Economic and Educational Opportunities and Senate Labor and Human Resources — to urge them to reject the Teamwork for Employees and Managers Act of 1995, the so-called TEAM Act.

The legislation, H.R. 743 and S. 295, introduced by Sen. Nancy L. Kassebaum (R-Kan.) and Rep. Steve Gunderson (R-Wis.), would lift the 60-year-old ban on certain types of company-sponsored employee committees by amending Section 8(a)(2) of the National Labor Relations Act.

The AFL-CIO damned the bills as an attempt by employers to "stifle legitimate worker voice and to stave off genuine worker organization."

At two town meetings over the Presidents' Day holiday, union members confronted Gunderson about the impact of the bill. The local LAC also met with another committee member, Rep. Thomas Sawyer (D-Ohio), and urged him to fight the bill.

"We're asking the central bodies and Legislative Action Committees to meet with every Democratic member of the House committee and selected Republicans to let them know how critical it is that this bill be defeated," said Peggy Taylor, the AFL-CIO's legislative director.

The AFL-CIO has set up a special direct hotline to the U.S. Capitol, 1-800/972-3524 (1-800/97-AFL-CIO), for workers to call the selected members of Congress.

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland warned workers not to be lulled into a false sense of security by promises that President Clinton would veto the bill, delivered to the Executive Council by Vice President Gore. "The administration's promise may even lead some Democrats to see less of a need to be with us," he said.

"Given these realities, we must continue and redouble our efforts to mobilize our members on this issue and to reach out to the general public so as to generate as much constituent pressure as possible," Kirkland said. "Representatives and senators must be persuaded that this is an issue of fundamental importance to our members."

The AFL-CIO damned the bills as an attempt by employers to "stifle legitimate worker voice and to stave off genuine worker organization."

"The TEAM Act has nothing to do with teamwork," the council statement said, pointing out that nothing in the NLRA restricts the use of work teams or any legitimate form of employee involvement.

What the NLRA prohibits and the TEAM Act would allow are illegitimate forms of employee involvement where non-union employers would be free to create employee organizations, hand pick their leaders, then deal with these puppets as if they were the legitimate voice of workers, the council said.

Even in workplaces where employees democratically elected a union to be their exclusive representative, the employer could, under the TEAM Act, create, fund and deal with a rival, company-dominated employee group, the council said.

"What this bill ultimately is about, then, is not teamwork but control. Management seeks what it has always sought: the freedom to 'involve' employees in ways that do not threaten management prerogatives," the AFL-CIO said.

The determination to fight against the TEAM Act is rooted in the long history of the labor movement's effort to nurture free, democratic trade unions, the council added.

In all parts of the world, "we have resisted government-controlled unions in all their forms. We fought to prevent political parties from gaining control of unions," the council said. "And we will not allow employer-controlled unions to be reborn in the United States."

Global employers trampling worker rights

By Michael Byrne
Bal Harbour, Fla.

Wherever trade unionists gather these days to discuss the problems that confront them, the specter of multinational corporate exploitation soon rears its ugly head.

And so it was that the AFL-CIO Executive Council came back again and again to this international threat to worker rights in a variety of statements, committee reports and discussions with visitors such as Bill Jordan, the new general secretary of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

The issue also was on parade in the form of strikers from Decatur, Ill. — the UAW against Caterpillar, the Rubber Workers against Bridgestone/Firestone and the Paperworkers against Staley Manufacturing — all with the common bond of multinational corporations demanding concessions in the name of competitiveness and taking advantage of loopholes in U.S. labor law.

''Virtually every one of our unions — with perhaps the exception of the public employee unions — has major employers who fly no flag except the Jolly Roger for all practical purposes,'' AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland told a news conference. ''Those employers have no country.

''They are multinational. They are international. And they'll move around the world wherever they see fit...with the push of a computer button,'' he said. ''That's what we're up against.''

Workers are up against largely unregulated corporate entities whose sales in many cases are greater than the total gross domestic product of most nations, the Economic Research Department reported to the council. The largest and most dominant are Japanese and U.S. corporations, and increasingly their investments are flowing to developing countries in Latin America and Asia.

''The role of this investment, too, has shifted from exploiting new markets with local production facilities, and thus avoiding costly tariffs and other trade barriers, to producing goods abroad for export to developed markets, and thus taking advantage of low wages and weak governmental regulations,'' the report noted.

Because U.S. trade policy relies on unfettered trade and capital mobility, the council said in a statement, ''in practice, that is little more than a rationale for promoting the interests of multinational corporations.''

Jordan, a 59-year-old Briton who rose out of the Engineers and Electricians Union, warned of ''the rise of free market dogma, the enemy within the companies we negotiate with. No country can build walls high enough to keep it out. Real trade globalization is here with a vengeance.''

To counter multinational corporations, Jordan said, world labor must ''expose the rottenness of the free market dogma, the principle of benefiting a few against the interests of the many.'' He vowed to participate in a multilayered campaign for a social clause in all trade agreements.

''We must argue for the recognition of human and worker rights as a permit to trade,'' he said. ''We must argue that an international social clause is an integral part of fair trade.''

Jordan said he would lead the ICFTU in taking the trade union case to the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the International Labor Organization and the new World Trade Organization.

Meanwhile, unions can continue to work through the International Trade Secretariats, the world federations organized by industry, to deliver the message directly to the multinationals, Jordan said. And national labor centers like the AFL-CIO must continue to put pressure on their governments to support workers in world forums.

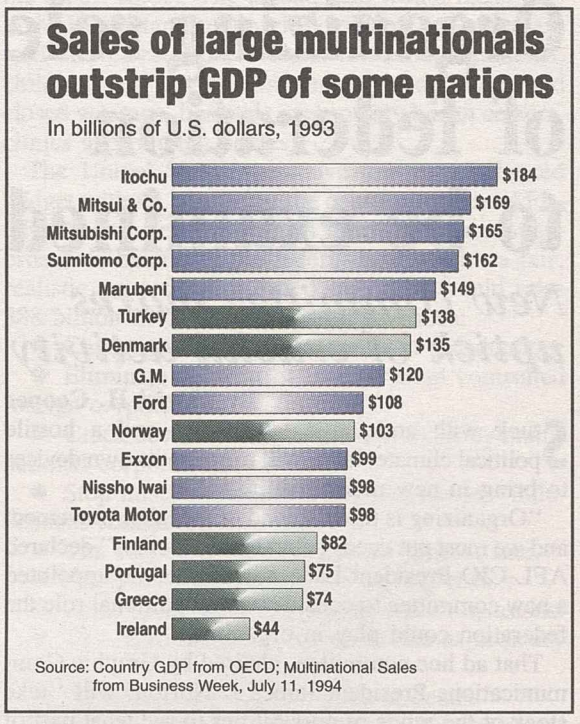
That is exactly what the AFL-CIO and its affiliates have been doing in a variety of disputes, reported Vice Presidents Richard L. Trumka of the Mine Workers and Jay Mazur of the Ladies' Garment Workers in separate reports on the Strategic Approaches and the Organizing and International Solidarity committees.

Trumka pointed out that UMWA strikers won two new agreements in the past five years with the help of international trade union, stockholder and consumer pressure on multinational corporations.

''We need to continue reaching beyond our borders and do it even earlier so that we can avert some of these strikes and have a successful conclusion to negotiations,'' he said.

The Economic Research Department report highlights a model corporate campaign — the Steelworkers' full-court press against Ravenswood Aluminum Corp. and its owner, financier Marc Rich, who was hounded in his home base of Switzerland and across Europe until he relented and settled on a contract.

''Workers are fighting back in the global arena, building on international union solidarity and applying guidelines developed by international organizations to deal with multinational corporations,'' the report stated, referring to a number of resources and procedures that can help unions deal with multinational corporate culprits.



One of those resources is the new Organizing and International Solidarity Committee, which is building on the success of a joint ILGWU and Clothing and Textile Workers program to help fledgling unions gain collective bargaining agreements in the Dominican Republic free trade zone.

''Reaching out to other unions around the world, we are engaged in a very futuristic kind of thing,'' ILGWU's Mazur reported to the council. ''In the global economy, we must extend the power and scope of our unions across borders. But we must share information and coordinate our activities.''

The committee, established last August, has created three working groups to inventory resources, explore a more coordinated approach to Mexico and to survey the needs of affiliated unions in these areas.

The importance of international labor solidarity was underlined by Jordan, who pointed out that ''the masters of capital are more organized and single-minded than at any time in their history. We must match them.''

Paraphrasing Shakespeare, he said: ''Our destiny lies not in the stars, but in ourselves...in trade unionism.''

''Multinational Corporations: Expanding Influence in the 1990s'' is available through the AFL-CIO Economic Research Department, 815 16th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

GSP to be next battleground for trade policy fight

By David Kameras and Michael Byrne

The labor movement clearly has its work cut out for it over the next year in the fight for worker rights in international trade agreements, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Thomas R. Donahue said.

Worker protections in the Generalized System of Preferences, which expires July 31, and in legislation authorizing ''fast-track'' negotiating authority with Chile, will be under attack by the Republican majority in Congress, Donahue warned the Executive Council at its meeting in Bal Harbour, Fla.

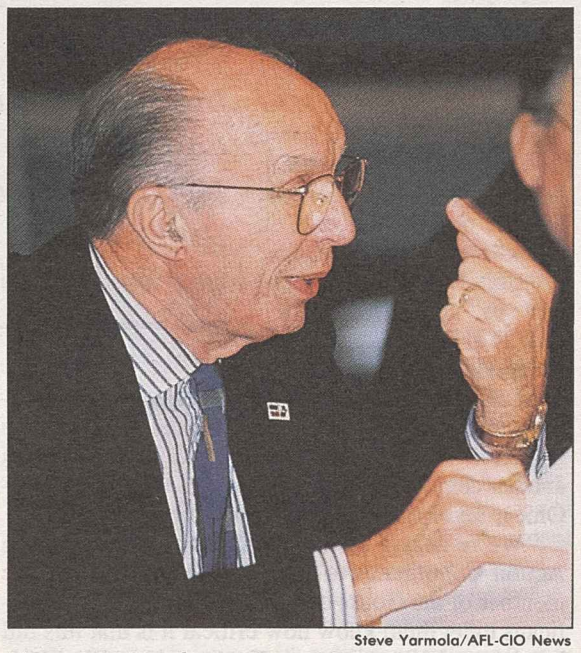
''Republicans have made clear they want to delink environmental issues from all trade agreements, and I think it is likely they also will try to end the worker rights conditionality in U.S. laws like the GSP,'' Donahue said.

The AFL-CIO continues to work with the Chilean unions in an appeal for bilateral negotiations between the United States and Chile, rather than accession to the flawed North American Free Trade Agreement currently in effect with Mexico and Canada, Donahue reported.

''We also have been meeting with Chilean government officials, urging them to strengthen the NAFTA side agreements, which hardly protect workers at all,'' Donahue said.

The inadequacies of those side agreements were addressed by several council members whose unions have sought to help Mexican workers organize to raise their standards of living, particularly in the wake of the current peso crisis.

In a statement, the council reflected on the 50 percent devaluation of the Mexican peso during the first year of NAFTA, which will result in more lost jobs and lower wages for U.S. workers, as well as a lower standard of living for their Mexican counterparts.


Steve Yarmola/AFL-CIO News

Thomas R. Donahue: "(Republicans) likely will try to end worker rights conditionality."

''To address its financial problems, Mexico will drastically cut imports and boost exports,'' the council said. ''At the same time, the weaker peso will make it cheaper for multinational corporations to produce for export from Mexico, so their operations there will grow.''

The AFL-CIO pointed out that the Clinton administration's bailout plan will not help Mexican workers, whose wage increases have been capped by the government, but will protect international bond investors.

''These events demonstrate once again that economic integration must be managed in a careful and prudent manner,'' the council said. ''The interests of workers should be a central concern.''

The events in Mexico since NAFTA ''show that our arguments were sound and correct and those that were put forward by the advocates of NAFTA were false and delusionary,'' AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland told a news conference. ''Unfortunately, the working people we speak for are going to pay the price.''

In other trade matters, Donahue told the council that the AFL-CIO has ''adamantly opposed and will continue to oppose'' China's membership in the World Trade Organization, the international bureaucracy recently established to administer multilateral trade agreements. Labor also will oppose continued most-favored-nation trading status for China, a notorious violator of labor and human rights.

To seal the deal with Republicans over passage of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, legislation will be introduced to establish a five-member panel to review WTO decisions, Donahue noted, with provisions for withdrawal from the world body if the panel finds the United States was subject to three unfair WTO rulings.

Social programs may be on the block when Congress has to come up with $500 million per year to make up for lost tariff revenues to renew GSP, as well as another $325 million over five years to provide so-called ''NAFTA parity'' for countries in the Caribbean Basin Initiative, Donahue said.

Serbian unionist is rights winner for opposing war

Branislav Canak, a Serbian trade unionist who risks his life daily to try to end the bloodshed in his native land, is the winner of the AFL-CIO's 1995 George Meany Human Rights Award.

The AFL-CIO Executive Council voted the award to Canak, president of Nazavisnost, the Serbian free trade union confederation. Nazavisnost represents more than 300,000 workers belonging to democratic trade unions inside Serbia and Montenegro.

Under Canak's leadership, the confederation has been the only institutional voice inside Serbia opposing the Milosevic regime and demanding an immediate end to the bloodshed in the former Yugoslavia. It has called for full recognition of the newly independent nations in the region and has defended freedom of association for all workers, regardless of ethnicity.

Nazavisnost has been recognized by the international labor community for its key role in the anti-war, anti-Milosevic democratic opposition within Serbia, as well as its efforts to bring together the independent unions from all the countries of the former Yugoslavia.

A broadcast reporter for the state-run Radio TV Belgrade, Canak opposed censorship and media control. He was demoted to clerical duty and officially denounced on a regular basis. He was eventually put on involuntary leave and finally barred from the premises.

Despite numerous threats to his safety and that of his family, Canak has refused to leave his country.

During a visit to AFL-CIO headquarters in June 1993, Canak urged the United States to step up its support for democratic institutions in Serbia and to use its power to end the carnage in the former Yugoslavia.

As the world's only superpower, Canak said, the United States must take the lead in ending the war. He also said the United States should stop believing reports from state-run media and instead identify and support Serbian groups that promote democracy.

Previous winners of the award include South Korean democratic opposition leader Kim Dae Jung; Stefan Nedzynski, general secretary of the Postal, Telegraph and Telephone International; Chinese freedom fighter Dr. Fang Lizhi; Kazimieras Uoka, chairman of the Lithuanian Workers Union; Zambian President Frederick J.T. Chiluba; Han Dongfang, founder of Beijing Workers Autonomous Federation; and Cuban free trade union leader Mario Chanes.

AFL-CIO News

Branislav Canak, meeting with reporters at AFL-CIO headquarters in 1993, had urged the United States to take a leading role in stopping the bloodshed in the former Yugoslavia.



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

UAW President Owen Bieber, left, and Rubber Workers President Kenneth Coss, right, update the Executive Council on national strikes against Caterpillar and Bridgestone/Firestone, respectively, in which workers have been out since last year. At center are Jack Sheinkman of the Clothing and Textile Workers and AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Thomas R. Donahue.

Decatur strikers praised, fortified

Council condemns three multinational employers

By James B. Parks

The AFL-CIO praised the courage of thousands of trade unionists involved in three long-running strikes and pledged to intensify efforts to assist them.

The Executive Council met with presidents of three striking locals from Decatur, Ill., where some 4,000 workers, 7 percent of the town's work force, are off the job at A.E. Staley Manufacturing, Caterpillar and Bridgestone/Firestone plants.

Every council member signed an "honor roll of solidarity" with the strikers and some made plans, in response to an appeal from UAW President Owen Bieber, to join in rallies running throughout March in Decatur.

Decatur is one location for the nationwide Caterpillar and Bridgestone strikes. About 14,000 UAW members have been on strike at Caterpillar since last June. Some 4,000 Rubber Workers are in the eighth month of a strike against Bridgestone/Firestone and Pirelli Armstrong, and some 760 Paperworkers have been locked out by Staley for nearly two years.

The council, in a statement, said it would continue to offer the services of the Strategic Approaches Committee "and other resources of the federation to bring the support of the entire labor movement behind the efforts of these three unions to settle their disputes."

The AFL-CIO and its Industrial Union Department "will continue to work, both at home and abroad, to bring pressure on these multinational employers, wherever they do business, to negotiate in good faith and settle these disputes," the council said.

The statement said the workers involved in the strikes and lockout are "on the front lines of a broad attack on working people that has far-reaching implications for union members throughout the country. We call on all affiliates, state federations and local central bodies to be active in these critical struggles — and to give desperately needed material and financial support to the strikers."

Bieber praised the strong support the labor movement has given to the strikers, but he warned that more help will be needed. "It is a trying time for the strikers," he said. The strike has spawned broken families, family hardships and even deaths, Bieber said, but the workers are determined to see the strike through. "Our motto is 'We're going to last one day longer than Caterpillar,'" he said.

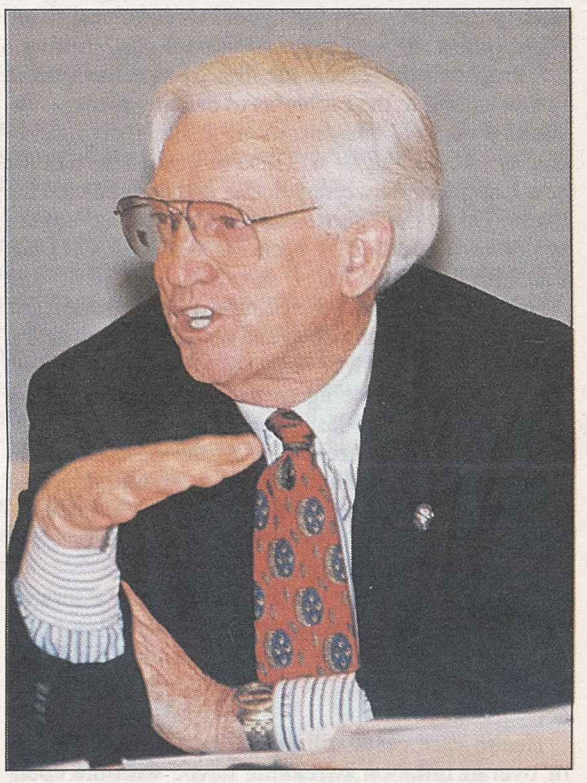
Negotiations between the UAW and the company will resume March 16.

UPIU President Wayne E. Glenn said international support for the Staley strikers has been very important, including efforts by the international food workers' secretariat to pressure Staley's owners, British-based Tate & Lyle PLC, to settle.

He praised the Teamsters and the Machinists for helping to get Miller Brewing, Staley's largest customer, to stop buying from the company until the strike is over. With continued support from the unions, "we are going to win this dispute," he said.

URW President Kenneth Coss said forcing a strike is part of a ploy by Bridgestone/Firestone, the largest tiremaker in the world, to destabilize the industry.

No new talks are scheduled, Coss said. But the union, which has received "an outpouring of support" from the AFL-CIO and all the affiliates, plans to expand its campaign. Coss said he will meet with the federation that represents the world's rubber workers to seek their aid in bringing Bridgestone/Firestone and Pirelli Armstrong to the bargaining table.



"With continued support from other unions, we are going to win this dispute."

— UPIU President Wayne E. Glenn

Mine Workers President Richard L. Trumka, who chairs the federation's Strategic Approaches Committee, reported to the council that the Bridgestone/Firestone strike entered a critical phase when the company began hiring permanent replacement workers for 2,300 of the 4,000 strikers. Coss agreed that was a major problem, because the presence of the scabs brings a new, complicated problem that makes it more difficult for the strike to be settled.

The AFL-CIO, through the Department of Organization and Field Services, has coordinated support for local unions on strike through field staff, state and local central bodies and community service liaisons, Trumka said.

He also reported that President Lane Kirkland and Secretary-Treasurer Thomas R. Donahue were instrumental in gaining the support of President Clinton and Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich in speaking out against the use of replacement workers while appealing for an end to the disputes.

At Staley, the AFL-CIO is assisting the UPIU by organizing support for the workers in the national and international religious community, Trumka said. The federation's organizing department developed a statement signed by over 400 U.S. religious leaders which was presented at the annual stockholders' meeting of Tate & Lyle in London.

Health care problems still need solution

By Colleen M. O'Neill

Trade unionists are unbowed in their determination to realize comprehensive health care reform, even as the Republicans in Congress move to cut budgets and ease regulations.

That's because the American people know the problem remains, said Service Employees President John J. Sweeney, who delivered the assessment of the Health Care Committee to the AFL-CIO Executive Council meeting in Bal Harbour, Fla.

''Republican congressional leaders have targeted Medicare and Medicaid for some $300 billion in cuts over the next five years,'' warned Sweeney, who chairs the committee. Proponents of truly comprehensive health care reform must keep an eye on GOP initiatives, he said.

The danger in allowing the issue to lie fallow too long is that the new congressional leadership can hijack the issue and make it their own, the committee report noted.

Sweeney said the cuts proposed by the Republicans would ''not only devastate health coverage for the elderly and the poor, but would undermine private health plans through huge additional cost shifting.

''Proposals that create the illusion of reform while in fact adding to the problems of existing plans — insurance market reorganization, medical savings accounts and the like — will also be pushed hard in the new Congress,'' Sweeney noted, and he predicted the likelihood of the ''most serious attempt yet'' to tax health care benefits, a proposal the AFL-CIO has staunchly opposed.

He called for labor, the Clinton administration and other allies to take initiative and put forth strong action to preserve the health coverage of average Americans.

''The best defense against these attacks lies in a spirited renewal of last year's effort to win comprehensive health care reform,'' the AFL-CIO said in a fact sheet. ''The administration should press the case for reform and challenge the new Congress to act in this session to preserve the health coverage of working American families.

''Loophole-free cost containment, quality assurance and coverage for all Americans is still within reach for our society, but the difficulty of the task grows with each year we fail to muster the political will to act.''

Health care costs still are rising at twice the rate of overall inflation, wreaking havoc with the country's economy and devastating family, business and government budgets.

One recent estimate measures the toll of increased health costs in the loss of real gross domestic product at 0.5 percent over five years and 1.3 percent over 17 years; employment is predicted to be off by 1.7 percent in manufacturing industries and by 1.9 percent in construction.

Wages continue to fall for America's working families, and a recent study of private pension coverage by the AFL-CIO Department of Employee Benefits shows that deteriorating retirement income also is directly related to excessive health care costs.

Those factors, along with the rush by employers to embrace aggressive managed care as a way to stem spiraling costs, have combined to endanger Medicare and Medicaid. Labor's position remains the same: those programs should come under the same cost-containment regimen as private health coverage and any savings should be reserved for extending coverage to those now without coverage.



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

Haim Ramon, newly elected chairman of Histadrut, describes his efforts to expand the trade union base of the Israeli federation, which has grown with members interested in its health plan and not members organized for collective bargaining. Ramon, also a member of the Knesset, said Israel is determined to follow through with the peace process despite continued Arab terrorism.

Unions stand behind baseball players

Teamsters won't deliver peanuts and Cracker Jack

By Michael Byrne
Bal Harbour, Fla.

Major league baseball players, members of an unaffiliated union, received the unqualified support of the unions of the AFL-CIO.

''Their determination to stand together and achieve a fair settlement — in the face of intense employer opposition — has earned the respect and support of union members and working people everywhere,'' the Executive Council said.

Ron Carey, president of the Teamsters, announced during the council meeting that his union would not deliver beer and other concessions to the 25 ballparks where it has contracts.

In its statement, the council pointed out that the players are facing the same kind of anti-union animus that many other union workers face.

''They are battling employer attempts to assert arbitrary power,'' it said. ''They are seeking reasonable compromise through the collective bargaining process. And, like all too many AFL-CIO trade unionists, their employers have brought in scabs to continue operations.''

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland told a news conference that the council action is consistent with his long-held belief that ''striking workers are worthy of support regardless of their race, color, creed or batting average.''

''The players right now are not asking fans to boycott the games, nor are they asking ballpark workers not to go to work,'' AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Thomas R. Donahue reported after talking with officials of the Major League Baseball Players Association. ''They don't want to destroy work opportunities for people who make $25-$30 a day.''

Donahue said the players have not yet decided whether they will picket at the ballparks if scab players attempt to open the season.

Representatives of some 20,000 ballpark workers from five AFL-CIO unions met recently to discuss a unified response to the strike, he reported. The federation's Organization and Field Services Department will stay in touch with local AFL-CIOs in major league cities, Donahue said.

The council saluted ''the courage and integrity of Detroit Tigers manager Sparky Anderson and Baltimore Orioles owner Peter Angelos for their refusal to participate in the scabbing of America's pastime.''

The council's mid-winter meeting also included a closed-door executive session that consumed one afternoon. In other actions, the council:

- Supported the workers at the Cleveland Red Cross Blood Service, members of the Service Employees District 1199-OH, who are threatened with loss of jobs in a reorganization. The AFL-CIO offered to use its offices to reach a settlement in the dispute, in which the Cleveland office is seeking to transfer the jobs to non-union personnel.
- Agreed to table a proposal to change the federation's longtime position against the export of Alaskan oil to a position of neutrality. The request had been made by the Seafarers, who stand to lose the last three U.S.-flag independent oil tankers. Several unions opposed changing the position.
- Agreed to recognize two separate factions of the former National Marine Engineers, one as the Marine Engineers and another as the former National Maritime Union, without ruling on the legalities of the dispute between the two groups. The council accepted that recommendation from a three-person committee headed by Electrical Workers President John J. Barry.
- Agreed to raise the target for state federation affiliation from 44 percent to 46 percent and to levy a penalty of 1 cent per member for unions that don't meet that goal. The penalty has been delayed twice over the past several years. Thirty-one unions have not met the target, Donahue reported.
- Approved the mergers of the Firemen and Oilers with the Service Employees and the United Garment Workers with the Food and Commercial Workers to leave the AFL-CIO with a total of 81 affiliated unions.
- Approved a temporary exoneration of per capita tax for the Longshoremen and Warehousemen, who are planning a membership referendum to raise the union's per capita to make up for a budget shortfall.
- Endorsed the April 9 march by the National Organization for Women to urge an end to violence against women, as well as anti-abortion violence and the adverse effects of the Republicans' ''Contract with America'' on poor women.

Civil rights hero Lewis wins community service award

Civil rights pioneer Rep. John Lewis has been voted the AFL-CIO's Murray-Green-Meany award for community service.

Lewis, a five-term Georgia Democrat, serves as chief deputy minority whip. At the height of the civil rights movement, from 1963 to 1966, he served as chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. SNCC played a major role in the sit-ins and other activities of students in the civil rights movement.

Lewis worked with AFL-CIO Vice President A. Philip Randolph, the director of the 1963 March on Washington. During a 1965 march for voting rights in Selma, Ala., Lewis was brutally beaten by Alabama state troopers. That march and a subsequent march from Selma to Montgomery, led by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., spurred passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

''It is especially significant that we recognize John Lewis at a time when the rights he fought for are under attack,'' said Letter Carriers President Vincent R. Sombrotto, who heads the federation's community services committee. Sombrotto nominated Lewis for the award at the AFL-CIO Executive Council's February meeting.

In winning the award, Lewis joins such other civil rights stalwarts as Bayard Rustin, Msgr. George G. Higgins, Rep. Claude Pepper, Marian Wright Edelman, Rep. Mickey Leland, Arthur Flemming and Arthur Ashe as Murray-Green-Meany honorees.

The council also called on trade unionists to join with Lewis and hundreds of marchers from around the nation to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Selma-to-Montgomery march, scheduled to start March 5.

The march should ''serve as a reminder that the struggle for voting rights continues and that full participation of all citizens in the country's political process remains an unfulfilled goal,'' the council said.

Gore, Democrats vow stand against GOP 'Contract'

Continued from Page 1

by the minority leaders in the House and Senate, Rep. Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.) and Sen. Thomas Daschle (D-S.D.), who warned about the Republican plan to gut social programs and to radically restructure the role of government.

"(House Speaker) Newt Gingrich says you can't get to a balanced budget without a shift in the whole culture," said Gephardt. "He means to create a revolution and he has 80 Republican freshmen who are to the right of Gingrich himself. Unfortunately, I believe they have the votes in the House to do the revolution there."

Gephardt's appraisal of the anti-government, deregulatory march in the House was seconded by Minority Whip David E. Bonior (D-Mich.) and by Rep. William Clay (D-Mo.), who saw his important Post Office and Civil Service Committee disbanded by the new Republican majority this year.

Noting that Gingrich and his new majority had taken "Labor" out of the title of what now is the Economic and Education Opportunities Committee, Clay said, "They're really getting ready to take labor out, unless we do some serious strategizing."

Bonior said Gingrich may have some serious problems of his own. Gingrich's "worst nightmare," Bonior said, "is that the American people are beginning to take seriously some of the outrageous things he says and does."

Rep. William F. Goodling (R-Pa.), chairman of the House EEOC, also met with the council. Other invited Republican leaders — Speaker Gingrich, Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole (R-Kan.) and Senate Labor and Human Resources Chair Nancy L. Kassebaum (R-Kan.) — did not attend, but left the door open for future acceptance of AFL-CIO invitations.

Goodling, who has a 27 percent lifetime COPE voting record, promised to keep an open mind on the anti-labor legislation before the committee — including repeals of the Davis-Bacon and the Service Contract acts, and the company unions bill. But he cited two non-union companies as examples of model workplaces and professed that competitiveness is his overarching concern among employment issues.

Daschle and Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.), a longtime champion of workers who received a rousing ovation, offered some hope that the Republican assault on worker rights could be headed off in the Senate, where Democrats will use the filibuster just as the Republicans used it last year to stymie a variety of worker initiatives, including the bill to ban the permanent replacement of striking workers.

Kennedy said he would not have been returned to Congress in 1994 if it had not been for labor's efforts, and particularly the help of striking Paperworkers from Indiana who traveled to Massachusetts to confront Kennedy's opponent, Mitt Romney, whose company squeezed out jobs at its Indiana plant.

"This group of workers really tapped into a wellspring," Kennedy said. "They came to Massachusetts and talked about worker rights. It's a powerful force. It captures the core of what this country is about."

Daschle promised he would lead Senate Democrats on a mission to protect jobs, wages and workplace safety, as well as the role of government in American society. "And we must halt the trend of future disparity between workers and the rest of America."

That theme was taken up by Gore and Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich, who drew praise from council members for bringing attention to job insecurity and wage stagnation in the current economy, "a big voice in the new wasteland," Ladies' Garment Workers President Jay Mazur said.

The contrast between the Clinton administration and the Republican congressional leadership "could not be seen more clearly than in the issue of the minimum wage," Gore said. "This is another one of those fights that you make for millions of people who are not your members. Our polls show that 80 percent of the American people favor it."



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

Rep. David E. Bonior (D-Mich.) tells the AFL-CIO Executive Council that Democrats in Congress and the White House "are the last gate before the tide sweeps through. . . The majority of our caucus supports your agenda. You have 150 solidly with you."

Grass-roots campaign rallies workers

Continued from Page 1

The LACs, now in more than 100 of the nation's 435 congressional districts, set up meetings with key members of Congress. To be effective, Taylor said, local unions must participate more than they have in the past. "We have asked affiliates to take specific responsibility to generate activity."

Legislative directors of affiliated unions also will become more involved in the communication process, Taylor said. "We must make sure that pivotal legislators get the message from at least three local unions in their district," she said. "This will require a lot more work, but also a lot more sense of involvement."

Communications will be enhanced at the regional level through Campaign Updates, the periodic FAXed messages to 500 union activists that were so useful during the legislative campaigns on health care and the North American Free Trade Agreement, Hardesty said. Those messages now are available instantaneously to a wider audience on LaborNET, the on-line information service.

Update is a rapid response mechanism that will help as the various "Stand UP" campaigns move forward, Hardesty said. He said the theme already is being used for Workers Memorial Day and the campaign against legalizing employer-dominated, puppet unions. And it complements the "Protecting the American Standard of Living" campaign launched earlier against repeal of the Davis-Bacon Act.

"This effort is the product of relentless discussion by public relations directors among all the affiliates," Hardesty said, noting that the message development grew out of a variety of surveys on the public perception of labor's role in the larger society. The new outreach perhaps was reflected best in the signature of the campaign, he said: "The men and women of the AFL-CIO leading the fight for America's working families."

The campaign also includes media training for various elected leaders, Hardesty noted. Eleven council members already have undergone the training and more are being scheduled by the federation's Labor Institute of Public Affairs.

— **Michael Byrne**



With this umbrella slogan, the AFL-CIO is taking the message to trade unionists and the general public that labor is determined to Stand UP for good jobs, good wages, worker protections and the right to representation.

Bonior sees Gingrich breaches of ethics, points to Murdoch

House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) may be guilty of ethical breaches that warrant an investigation by an outside independent prosecutor, Minority Whip David E. Bonior (D-Mich.) told the AFL-CIO Executive Council.

Bonior detailed a long list of ethical questions posed by allegations against the speaker, from misuse of public funds to influence peddling to Internal Revenue Service violations. Perhaps most egregious, Bonior said, was Gingrich's aborted $4.5 million book deal with international publishing magnate Rupert Murdoch.

"He said there was no connection between the book deal and the billions of dollars of business Murdoch had pending before the Federal Communications Commission," Bonior said. "But Murdoch's chief lobbyist was there, and they did talk about business before the FCC."

Bonior described Murdoch's $4.5 million offer to Gingrich as part of a Murdoch pattern of using lucrative book deals to curry governmental favor. Murdoch had a similar book transaction with former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, the daughter of Chinese Premier Deng Hsiaoping and a Saudi prince.

Prior to Bonior's visit, the council adopted a statement urging the Clinton administration to seek steps against corrupt international transactions by U.S. trading partners among the nations of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

While U.S. companies are subject to anti-corruption laws, bribery by multinational corporations is tolerated in many nations, and actually invited in some countries, where bribes are treated as tax deductions, the council pointed out. Such corruption undermines economic progress and often jeopardizes democratic institutions, the AFL-CIO noted.

Council slams immigration fear-mongering

By James B. Parks

The AFL-CIO strongly criticized politicians who try to make immigrants the scapegoats for the nation's economic and social ills, calling instead for immigration policies that reflect the American tradition of justice, dignity and opportunity.

The Executive Council, after adopting the statement, approved plans to purchase advertising in publicizing the federation's stand on immigration. In addition to major publications, full-page ads will be placed in some non-English-language publications.

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland assailed the anti-immigrant California Proposition 187, noting that "we intend to use this statement to help build a coalition of people who share the common belief in decent treatment of immigrants, and who are unwilling to shift society's failures onto them."

The multilingual campaign was welcomed by AFL-CIO Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson of AFSCME, who noted that many immigrants may have gotten a bad impression of unions from their experiences in Mexico and other countries.

"They need to hear the message of where the AFL-CIO stands regarding immigrants," she said. "There are Hispanics and Asian-Americans who can relate to us if they hear the message that the AFL-CIO will not stand for immigrant bashing . . . and hear it in their own language."

The council declared that "immigrants are not the cause of America's declining wages and the export of good jobs overseas," nor are they responsible for the laundry list of problems blamed on them by exploitative politicians and hate-mongers.

At the same time, Americans have a right to set reasonable rules to govern the entry of immigrants. "American workers, in particular, have the right to expect that their government's laws governing entry and legal residence be respected by others — an expectation that the overwhelming majority of immigrants honor and accept," the council said.

But those laws should be based on facts and democratic principles, not the "phony statistics, bitter myths and political hypocrisy" that fueled California's Proposition 187 and other efforts to deny benefits to legal immigrants.

"To deny public assistance to law-abiding, legal immigrants who may find themselves in temporary difficulty is undemocratic, unfair and contemptible," the council said. "To deny illegal immigrants what few services they may obtain — like emergency medical care — or to throw school children onto the streets and deny them immunization against communicable diseases is heartless and dangerous."

The AFL-CIO also called on the federal government to help local governments affected by illegal immigration by deterring unauthorized entries and helping them cope with the impact and costs of growing immigrant populations. As part of that help, it called for vigorous enforcement of wage-and-hour, safety and anti-discrimination laws.

AFL-CIO: Don't take budget out of workers' hides

Bal Harbour, Fla.

The AFL-CIO Executive Council called on the Clinton administration and Congress to reject any attempt to balance the federal budget debt on the backs of federal and postal workers and retirees.

The council urged managers in the executive branch to undertake full consultation with federal employees and their unions in order to protect against the ravages likely to be directed at both by new anti-government congressional majorities.

In a separate statement, the council opposed an attempt to reduce postal and federal workers' and retirees' benefits.

Although President Clinton has generated some $64 billion in savings by reducing the size of the federal work force over the past two years, the council said, new congressional leaders are looking to save more on the backs of federal workers.

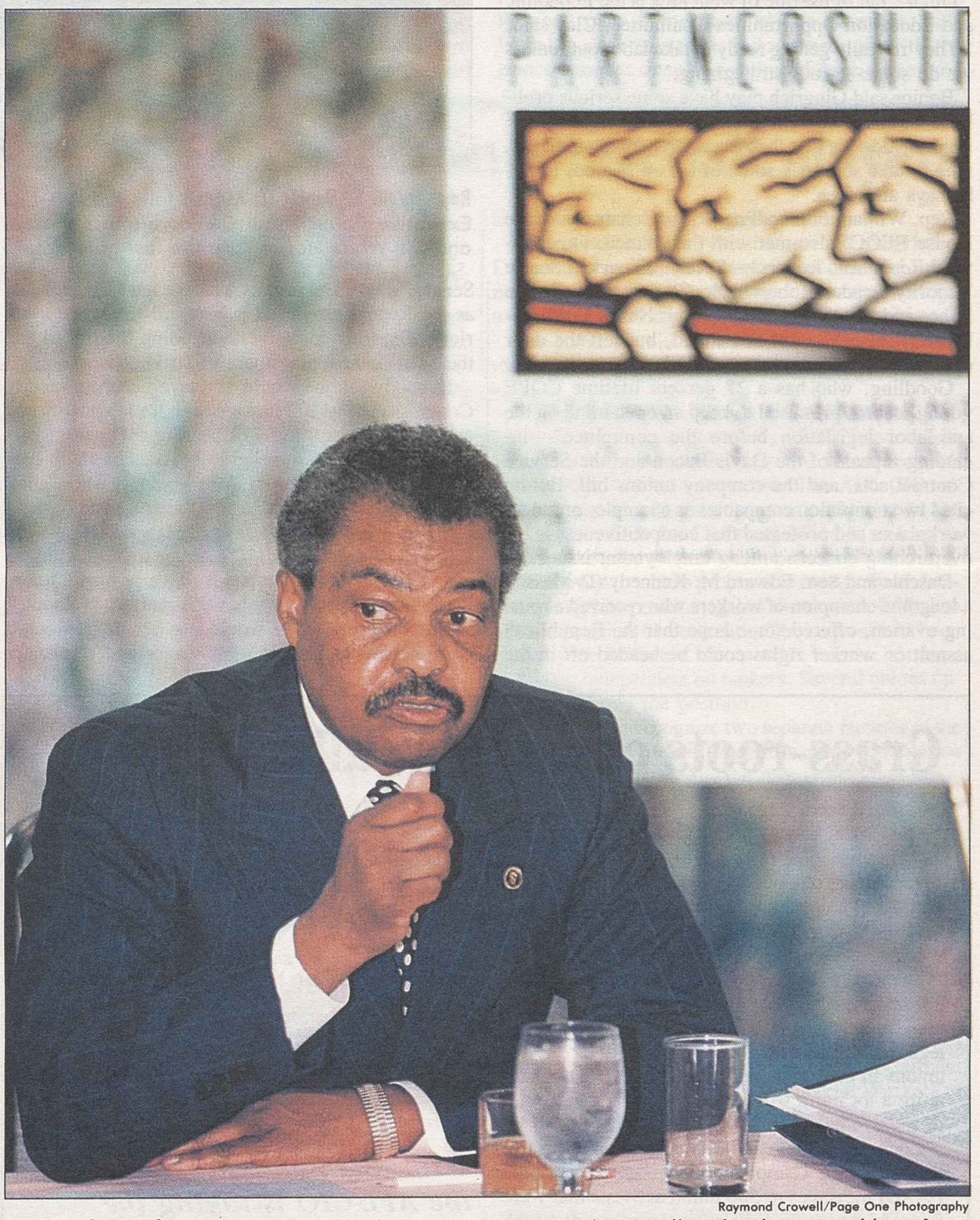
Such a move, the AFL-CIO said, would imitate the "downsizing craze" that has swept many U.S. industries and would ignore productivity and efficiency issues that are imperative to maintaining service.

The council urged "Congress and the administration to allow the current partnership between the federal government and its employees to continue to improve government in a way that preserves the integrity and viability of the federal work force."

One of the goals of "reinventing government" is to improve service delivery. The council statement also pointed to the difficulty of achieving this goal with further reductions.

The council also pointed to a working group created by the Senate Republican leadership to study entitlements, with a goal of $450 billion in cuts. Much of those cuts would be in cost-of-living adjustments and possibly a higher retirement age for federal and postal retirees and Social Security wage-earners.

"The AFL-CIO will oppose any congressional attacks on postal/federal retirement benefits and any attempts to raise the retirement age for postal/federal workers and Social Security wage-earners," the statement said.



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

AFGE's John Sturdivant: "Make the tough decision to pay workers well and to have good benefits."

Union outreach to women, minorities, youth is sought

Bal Harbour, Fla.

It's an uphill climb to get more women, minorities and younger workers into leadership positions, the committee on full participation told the Executive Council, but the labor movement is determined to see it happen.

"There are a lot of success stories in unions that have been pro-active," Government Employees President John N. Sturdivant, the committee chair, reported to the council. But too few unions have responded to the committee's survey to allow for specific recommendations, he said.

"People say they know what the problems are, but we need facts," Sturdivant said, urging union officers to respond quickly to the confidential survey. The committee is charged to make recommendations to the 1995 AFL-CIO Convention in October.

Vice President Gloria Johnson, one of three women and one of three African-Americans on the council, said she expected the four upcoming AFL-CIO regional conferences to play a major role in gathering information. The federation's support groups, including the Coalition of Labor Union Women chaired by Johnson, will participate, along with local and regional union officials.

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland told news reporters of the importance of the work of those support groups — CLUW, Frontlash, the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement, the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, the A. Philip Randolph Institute and the National Council of Senior Citizens.

"We regard them as good channels both into those communities and from those communities to us," Kirkland said. "They have been very effective."

Kirkland said labor is not afraid to break strongly entrenched traditions, pointing to his efforts in the early 1980s to allow women and minorities who are not presidents of their unions to serve on the council. "Changing traditions is sometimes more difficult than changing constitutions," he said.

Kirkland appointed the full participation committee last year, noting that research shows women and African-Americans join unions more readily than any other groups. Women now represent approximately 45 percent of the work force and make up about 30 percent of union membership.

African-American workers represented by unions total 2.8 million, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Some 1.6 million Hispanic workers are represented by unions.

COURTS

Honoraria ban rejected

The U.S. Supreme Court struck down a law that prohibited most federal employees from getting paid for speeches and written articles. The court ruled that the honoraria ban violated government workers' free-speech rights.

The ban "never should have been put into effect in the first place," Government Employees President John N. Sturdivant said. "The court has confirmed AFGE's position that the ban was inappropriate and unlawful from the beginning."

Federal employees were "unintended casualties" of a law designed to eliminate the appearance of influence-buying for members of Congress, said the National Treasury Employees Union, which brought the suit.

A five-member court majority led by Justice John Paul Stevens said the law cannot be applied to any executive branch employee not classified as a senior executive. But the decision left Congress free to try writing a narrower law.

Federal law long banned senior officials from collecting fees for speaking or writing about topics linked to their official duties. This case, U.S. vs. NTEU, began when Congress used the Ethics Reform Act of 1989 to extend the ban to all federal employees and expand it to cover all outside speaking or writing.

Companies get pension break

The U.S. Supreme Court gave a financial break to companies that withdraw from some employee pension funds while still owing money to them.

The court ruled unanimously in Milwaukee Brewery Workers' Pension Plan vs. Joseph Schlitz Brewing Co. that such companies do not owe interest on the pension debt until the year after they withdraw from the fund.

Schlitz belonged to the Milwaukee Brewery Workers' Pension Plan along with the makers of Miller and Pabst beer. In 1981, Schlitz withdrew from the pension fund. The pension fund was underfunded by $111 million and federal law required Schlitz to pay its share of the shortfall, calculated at $23 million.

A federal judge ordered Schlitz to pay interest for 1981, the year it withdrew from the plan. But the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals reversed that ruling, saying Schlitz did not owe interest until 1982.

BMWE to appeal ruling

The Maintenance of Way Employees plan to appeal a federal court ruling rejecting its bid to negotiate individually with major freight carriers.

The railroads "are currently following a course of behavior designed to protract negotiations in the belief that they can ultimately provoke a national strike or lockout, which would force Congress to end any dispute," BMWE President Mac A. Fleming said.

The decision "makes collective bargaining impossible. We have no choice but to appeal," he said.

The BMWE is involved in contract talks with eight major railroads represented by the National Carriers Conference Committee. At issue is whether the union can negotiate contracts with each individual company or whether it can only bargain on a multiemployer basis with the NCCC, as the carriers claim.

U.S. District Judge Thomas F. Hogan ruled that the Railroad Labor Act does not necessarily require multiemployer handling of all issues, but may compel it on certain issues. An issue-by-issue evaluation may yield "mixed results," Hogan said, with the union winning some and the carriers winning some.



Steve Yarmola/AFL-CIO News

Senate Minority Leader Thomas Daschle (D-S.D.) said Congress should pass health care reform legislation to prevent "nightmares" such as the one facing retirees at John Morrell & Co.

Court to decide pension rights

UFCW seeks reversal of Morrell benefits termination

By James B. Parks

In a case that could affect health benefits for millions of retirees across the country, the Food and Commercial Workers will ask the U.S. Supreme Court to decide if a company can terminate benefits for all its retired workers.

John Morrell & Co., a Midwest meatpacker with plants in Iowa and South Dakota, canceled all benefits for its 3,300 retirees Jan. 31, immediately following a federal appeals court's refusal to hear the union's appeal. The UFCW is asking the Supreme Court to review the lower court decision.

"Morrell has broken faith with its retired workers," UFCW President Douglas H. Dority said. "After a lifetime of hard work, the Morrell retirees were promised lifetime health benefits. Now a federal court has wrongly sanctioned an immoral and . . . illegal termination of benefits."

Joining Dority at a press conference during the AFL-CIO Executive Council meeting in Bal Harbour, Fla., was Senate Minority Leader Thomas Daschle (D-S.D.), who said retirees should not have to go to the Supreme Court "to get the same benefits that people all over the world get from the day they are born until the day they die."

"The appeals court has turned the law upside down," said union attorney Irving King. "The presumption in the law has been that retiree health benefits were for a lifetime unless specifically stated otherwise. Now the court has created a new standard that benefits are limited to the duration of a collective bargaining agreement or the discretion of management, unless specifically stated otherwise.

"Few retiree health benefit plans could meet this standard," he said. "Millions of retirees could be at risk of losing benefits."

The rising cost of health care and the defeat of comprehensive health care reform last year have led to numerous corporate efforts to reduce or to eliminate health benefits for both active and retired employees. Some 14 million retirees nationwide depend on employer-provided health benefits.

Losing the benefits can be devastating. "We've already suffered a suicide," said Jesse Merrill, a leader of UFCW Local P-1 in Ottumwa, Iowa. "With $600 a month in prescription costs, one of the retirees just couldn't see how he could make it without the benefits, so he took his own life."

"Other retirees are going to have to apply for welfare just to keep food on the table because of the cost of health care," he continued. "If what Morrell did isn't illegal, it should be. We're people who worked hard all our lives."

For four decades, Morrell negotiated retiree benefits with the UFCW and its predecessor unions. Every worker who retired from 1957 through 1988 received lifetime benefits. On retirement, workers were told by Morrell that they would receive benefits for the rest of their lives. An appendix to the union contract stated that lifetime benefits would be paid.

Morrell, a subsidiary of Cincinnati-based Chiquita Brands International, informed the union in 1991 it intended to modify retiree health benefits and to increase co-payments, but made no mention of terminating the benefits. Within less than a month, the company filed suit in federal district court in Rapid City, S.D., to change the benefits.

When the court ruled in favor of the company, the UFCW appealed to the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. A three-judge panel upheld the lower court decision in October 1994. The union appealed to the full court, which refused to hear the case.

The company has offered a one-year continuation of benefits for employees not eligible for Medicare, at the employee's expense. The cost — $290 per month for the first four months and $400 per month for the remainder of the year — is as much as the entire pension for most retirees, the union said.

U.S.-LIUNA agreement helps union root out corruption

Bal Harbour, Fla.

The Laborers signed a unique agreement with the U.S. government that will aid the union's effort to eliminate corruption within its ranks, LIUNA President Arthur A. Coia told the Executive Council.

The agreement allows the union to remain self-governing and calls for judicial interference only if the union's internal reforms fail, Coia emphasized.

Saying the union is "99 percent sound," Coia said he negotiated the agreement with federal officials to avoid protracted litigation and to restore the union's public credibility.

Under the agreement, the government will provide information of any alleged wrongdoing and LIUNA would apply its ethics and disciplinary procedures to investigate and take appropriate action, he said.

The union recently revised its ethics code and disciplinary procedure and named three persons — an inspector general, an executive board attorney and independent hearing officer — to ensure that instances of wrongdoing are identified, investigated and prosecuted through fair and impartial internal procedures.

The agreement provides for joint selection, if necessary, of two more members, Coia said, but noted that this contingent consent decree does not allow for government monitors as some reports had indicated.

"LIUNA's general executive board is confident that the contingent consent decree will never be implemented," the union said in a statement. "LIUNA's leadership is determined to accomplish the task it has set for itself and looks forward to cooperating with the government for the benefit of all its members.

"The agreement . . . is the outgrowth of a determination by the government and LIUNA to explore innovative ways to cooperate in solving the problems facing the union," the statement said.

The AFL-CIO has strongly opposed government intrusion into the internal workings of unions, arguing that prosecutions of individuals should proceed if lawbreaking occurs, but that members should run their own unions.

Maritime trades face grave crisis, Sacco tells MTD

Bal Harbour, Fla.

The fate of the U.S.-flag merchant marine and the domestic shipbuilding industry could well be decided over the next two years, Maritime Trades Department President Michael Sacco told executive board members.

"Congress holds the key," he said. "But as maritime workers face their gravest crisis in more than 50 years, they must adjust to a new power structure in Washington."

Fortunately, Sacco pointed out, the maritime industry has always enjoyed strong bipartisan support, including that of Senate Majority Whip Trent Lott (R-Miss.), who also spoke to the gathering.

"I want a U.S.-flag fleet manned by American crews and U.S. ships built by American labor," Lott said.

The 103rd Congress failed to pass a maritime package last year, and "the window of opportunity to preserve both (the U.S.-flag merchant marine and domestic shipbuilding) industries is growing smaller with each passing day," Sacco warned. "Unless Congress moves quickly to enact maritime revitalization legislation, more than 250,000 Americans in all segments of the industry may find themselves unemployed."

President Clinton has included a maritime package in his proposed budget for the 1996 fiscal year.

The MTD president also pointed to preserving the Federal Maritime Commission, the 1984 Shipping Act, the Jones Act and cargo preference laws as important priorities, as well as combating efforts by other nations to reduce vessel manning to unsafe levels.

Maritime Administrator Albert J. Herberger predicted that, with funding coming from the Transportation Department budget rather than unpopular tonnage taxes, this year's maritime reform proposal stood a better chance of success on Capitol Hill.

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Thomas R. Donahue warned that Republican control of Congress "makes clearer every day the depth of their commitment to an anti-government, anti-worker agenda."

"Within the federation, we have begun a reordering of our legislative programs to help us meet the challenges of the next few years," he said, pointing to the need to focus on marginal congressional districts and "mobilize our people in those districts as never before."

Father Sinclair Oubre, president of the North American Maritime Ministry Association, described the substandard living and working conditions he frequently encounters aboard foreign-flag vessels manned by unorganized Third World seamen.

David Cockcroft, general secretary of the International Transport Workers Federation, added, "There is no other industry on the face of the earth where employers have so much choice and so little obligation to obey basic standards.

"The way the industry has developed internationally over the past 30 years is a disgrace," he said.

Other speakers included House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.), Transportation Deputy Secretary Morton Downey and National Labor Relations Board Chairman William Gould.



Steve Yarmola/AFL-CIO News

PED President Al Bilik introduces Puerto Rico's Gov. Pedro J. Rossello as AFSCME President Gerald W. McEntee and Service Employees President John J. Sweeney confer at right.

PED hails Puerto Rico opening

Delegates warned of dicey financial schemes

Bal Harbour, Fla.

A progressive governor in Puerto Rico means better times for the island's 280,000 government workers.

That was the message brought to the AFL-CIO Public Employee Department Executive Council meeting by Dr. Pedro J. Rossello, the new governor of the commonwealth, who said a bill he has introduced to extend collective bargaining rights to public employees would "in a single stroke revitalize a Puerto Rico union movement that has been sliding downhill for the past quarter-century."

The measure would implement bargaining in stages, beginning this summer. Open to negotiation as early as next January would be such non-economic issues as grievance procedures, payroll deduction of union dues and the recognition of bargaining units.

Also discussed at the meeting were such topics as the diversion of pension funds to balance state budgets and effective ways of solving labor-management conflicts.

Jonathan Brock, the executive director of the Secretary of Labor's Task Force on Excellence in State and Local Government Through Labor-Management Cooperation, noted that absolute individual security through no-layoff guarantees was essential to the success of joint partnerships.

In step with that, he noted that joint training was key to breaking any cycle of conflict in government and gave examples of successful programs that had used these principles.

Pension diversion is a particular concern because of implications for the future, said James J. Florio, co-chairman of the labor secretary's task force. His successor as New Jersey governor, Republican Christine Todd Whitman, is using state employee pension funds to balance her budget and pay for a tax cut, for example, and the practice is spreading.

Also on the topic of pensions, Pennsylvania State Treasurer Catherine Baker Knoll urged renewed attention to the use of pension funds for economically targeted investments and for full disclosure surrounding investments.

Dicey financial schemes also were the topic of another session on the bankruptcy in Orange County, Calif., with a detailed technical report presented to delegates. A fuller discussion is expected later as the situation unfolds.

Rep. Bernard Sanders (I-Vt.) energized the session with his call to "Organize, organize, organize!" and his suggestion that labor could lead the fight against the onslaught of right-wing politicians.

He urged labor to consider purchasing a cable TV network, publish popular journals to reach all American workers and aid in the formation of a progressive caucus within the Democratic Party, among other suggestions.

Also at the meeting was former Rep. William D. Ford, who received a special plaque for his service to labor and American workers during his many years on Capitol Hill. He echoed the concerns of Sanders regarding the Republican initiatives, and pledged to continue the fight for labor and working Americans in his private life as a Michigan lawyer.

TTD pledges fight to save transportation from budget ax

Bal Harbour, Fla.

The AFL-CIO Transportation Trades Department took aim at a number of anti-labor legislative actions directed at the various transport modes.

The TTD executive committee called on Congress and President Clinton to reject proposals to cut Amtrak and transit funding, roll back employee protections, eliminate the Interstate Commerce Commission and jeopardize airline safety.

"Two years ago, the new president and Congress rightfully called for revitalizing the nation's transportation system," said TTD President Ron Carey. "Today, through the balanced budget amendment and other budget schemes, we face a mindless rush to slash vital transportation programs and expose the public and transportation workers to great harm and the loss of service and jobs."

Cuts in mass transit operating assistance and other funding "would directly lead to service reductions, fare increases, lost jobs, higher state or local taxes or, most likely, a combination of the four," the committee said. It urged federal and state policy makers "to reject any calls for significant cuts in federal support for Amtrak, which would result in the destruction of passenger rail in this country."

TTD leaders also vowed to fight efforts to gut federal labor standards, including existing employee and wage protections such as those covering workers in transit, passenger and freight rail, government service contracts and building and construction.

On aviation, the TTD said it would work for reforms to "enhance the safety mission of the (Federal Aviation Administration and the air traffic control system) without compromising aviation safety or the security of airline employees and air traffic controllers."

But it said the department will guard against privatization proposals that "severely curtail the government's role in ensuring the safety of air travel and, potentially, the financial solvency of an industry already reeling from record losses."

The department held its meeting one day after a House subcommittee on aviation completed two days of hearings on whether to privatize or "corporatize" the air traffic control system.

Among statements and resolutions were those calling for proper oversight of the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement; extending commercial aviation's current exemption from fuel taxes; retaining prohibitions on cabotage and ownership of U.S. carriers by foreign airlines; preserving Railroad Retirement protections for current and retired rail workers; and securing funding for training on hazardous materials handling.

Speakers included David Cockcroft, general secretary of the International Transport Workers Federation, and Transportation Deputy Secretary Morton Downey.

BARGAINING

UAW, Deere in agreement

UAW members at Deere & Co. are voting on a tentative three-year contract covering some 10,500 employees at the lawn and farm equipment manufacturer.

"Job and income security will continue to be assured for UAW-Deere workers under the proposed agreement," said UAW Secretary-Treasurer Bill Casstevens, who heads the UAW division on agricultural implements.

"When negotiations are conducted in good faith, as these were, you get a satisfactory resolution without confrontation."

The atmosphere in the Deere negotiations contrasts sharply with the sour relations between the union and Caterpillar Inc., a Deere competitor. About 14,000 workers have been on strike since June against Caterpillar's unfair labor practices.

Deere employees have been working without a contract for about five months. The previous contract expired Sept. 30, 1994. Negotiations bogged down over the company's plan to link pay increases with productivity improvements. Negotiations resumed Feb. 22 and the agreement was reached four days later. The agreement would apply to Deere employees represented by 11 locals in five states.

URW offers to end strike

Armed with a ruling that could force Pirelli Armstrong to fire scab workers, the Rubber Workers offered to end unconditionally its seven-month strike against the tire maker.

The offer, which could return 1,000 strikers to their jobs, came after a regional director of the National Labor Relations Board advised the union that Pirelli committed unfair labor practices by unilaterally imposing new wages, pensions and benefits at two struck plants. The company began hiring permanent replacements the next day.

Pirelli cannot, under federal law, hire permanent replacements for workers involved in an unfair labor practices strike. If necessary, the company may be required to fire the scabs to reinstate the strikers, said Chuck Armstrong, URW's general counsel.

By offering to unconditionally end the strike, the URW triggered the company's duty to reinstate the strikers or face fines of as much as $1 million per week, he said.

URW Local 670 in Nashville, Tenn., and Local 703 in Hartford, Calif., have been on strike since July 15 against the company, the U.S. subsidiary of Italy's Pirelli SpA.

Kaiser pact approved

The Steelworkers ratified a new 47-month master agreement with Kaiser Aluminum & Chemical Corp., ending a nine-day walkout.

"This contract addresses the most important objectives of the USWA-represented employees while preserving the competitiveness of the company in the various markets it serves," said USWA District 38 Director Robert Petris in a joint statement with KACC officials.

The contract, which covers 3,000 workers at five plants in three states, runs from Nov. 1, 1994, through Sept. 30, 1998, and replaces a four-year contract that expired Oct. 31, 1994.

Members walked off the job Feb. 20 after rejecting a proposed four-year contract that union leaders said included unacceptable changes in work rules and job security.

Detroit janitors gain

Some 1,600 employees of nine Detroit commercial building cleaning companies will gain a 21 percent wage increase and better overtime pay under a new agreement ratified by members of the Service Employees.

The new six-year contract provides annual wage increases of 3.5 percent. Employees now earn between $4.25 and $8.50 an hour, according to SEIU Local 79 spokeswoman Stella Jaksa.

The workers also successfully resisted employer efforts to force concessions on health care benefits.

ESOP boosts firm and union

Buyout rescues jobs, creates workplace democracy

By James B. Parks

Electrical Workers at the newly born Mobile Tool International saved their jobs and stand to gain new members as a result of their purchase of the plant from the former Penn Central Corp.

"Our objective was to retain jobs. We knew what the job market was like and we knew 75 percent of our members would not be able to get jobs if the plant closed," said John Sena, senior assistant business manager for IBEW Local 111.

"Our members are very pleased to be able to own their own company and have greater knowledge and input into the company's future," said Local 111 Business Manager Bob Mason, a member of the new company's board of directors.

Penn Central, now American Premier Underwriters, announced in November 1993 that it was considering an employee stock ownership as a way of saving the plant. Otherwise, the plant would close.

"It caught us by surprise," Sena said. But the workers quickly sought and received help from their international union, as well as from the Steelworkers, who had purchased another Penn Central plant through an ESOP.

The $16 million purchase will give the Mobile employees a 76 percent interest in the aerial lift and telecommunications company over the next five to seven years. To facilitate the buyout, the employees agreed to about a 12 percent reduction in wages and benefits. The reductions will be offset by a substantial new profit-sharing plan and the stock.

The company, based in Westminster, Colo., employs 525 people at three plants. The IBEW represents 250 at the flagship plant. The other two plants, in Fort Wayne, Ind., and Frederick, Md., are non-union.

The ESOP comes with a new five-year collective bargaining agreement that includes a company neutrality clause if the union attempts to organize the non-union employees in the Westminster plant and the Indiana and Maryland plants.

The agreement also sets a new direction for labor-management relations. "The relationship between labor and management is completely changed," Sena said. "Management no longer looks at the workers with animosity, and the adversarial relationship has changed. Now they see that we have the same goals."

The agreement protects the employees' investment in the ESOP by requiring that any changes in the plan be approved by the union membership. The workers also have a member on the management committee.

Three of the nine members of the new board of directors will be selected by the union employees, one each from the local, the plant unit and one at large. The non-union employees will elect two members, one from the Westminster plant and one from the other two plants.

The chief executive officer and his appointee will occupy two seats, and one seat is reserved for American Capital Strategies, the Bethesda, Md., investment bank that brokered the buyout. The union and management will jointly select the other member.

To prepare the company to compete in the global economy, the agreement calls for several advances in workplace democracy. Workers now elect their lead persons and working foremen, Sena said. He said this is probably the first step toward having self-directed work teams in the near future. Management reserves the right to remove the foremen for cause only, Sena said.

In the same vein, line workers also will be able to gain training in skilled trades that they were unable to get before the ESOP, Sena said. Previously, the company only gave advanced training to white-collar workers while limiting blue-collar workers to job-specific training, he said.

Workers also have been given a say over whether the company can subcontract work that is now being done by the bargaining unit.

Another key innovation is that workers on the plant floor can bypass management and send issues they are concerned about directly to the new board of directors through a labor-management committee, Sena said.

All these innovations have given the workers a new faith in their workplace, Sena said. "I think we have a great chance to succeed," he added.

The Mobile ESOP is one of about 300 union-employee-owned enterprises in the country, according to AFL-CIO economist John Zalusky. The largest is United Airlines, which was purchased last year by members of the Machinists and Air Line Pilots.

ESOPs are "useful tools" to gain collective bargaining goals and to save jobs, Zalusky said. But he warns local unions that are considering buyouts to seek expert financial help and to get the backing of their international unions. "There are a lot of sharks out there," he said. "And you need someone to keep you ahead of them."

Unions prepare USAir survival plan

The Air Line Pilots, Machinists and Transport Workers are continuing to work together in an effort to keep USAir aloft.

The latest stage was reached Feb. 22 when the carrier presented its counterproposal to a union package offering "significant financial relief" to the airline.

During the meeting, which also was attended by representatives of the Flight Attendants, who are not a party to the joint union offer, management spelled out a five-year, $2.5 billion package, financed by $500 million a year to be contributed by all USAir employees.

In return, workers would gain a 20 percent equity stake, other financial returns and a role in corporate governance.

"In the unions' view, management's proposal still does not adequately address the unions' concerns in the areas of financial returns, financial restructuring of debt obligations, governance issues and job security," ALPA responded.

The new union proposal is expected to be ready soon, and management has been asked to be available to negotiate on an expedited basis.

The day after unions received the carrier's offer, USAir announced that it has sold off 11 of its Boeing 737s, further reducing job opportunities at the airline.

BCT gains ownership stake at Phillip Morris

Some 7,000 members of the Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers will receive cash bonuses and an ownership stake under a new three-year contract with Phillip Morris. The workers also agreed to extend a separate long-term agreement until 2003.

The long-term agreement, which was set to expire in 1997, guarantees union security, income during layoffs and union recognition, as well as no strikes or lockouts. Under the agreement, unresolved issues are submitted to arbitration. Negotiations will reopen at set intervals for discussing specific clauses.

Employees will receive an $800 lump-sum payment on each subsequent anniversary of the long-term agreement. The historic agreement has been in effect since 1979.

The basic agreement includes a $2,000 lump-sum payment to all workers on Feb. 1, followed by a 2 percent wage increase in 1997. All employees also will receive a promissory note equal to 35 shares of company common stock along with dividends accrued within the next year. Next February, they will receive the actual shares and the dividends or the cash equivalents.

The settlement also increases the average pension benefit for persons retiring after Feb. 1 and extends to three years the right of laid-off employees to transfer to another facility. A union-management task force will develop the job qualifications for persons transferring to new jobs. Employees who transfer will retain their years of service for determining benefits.

Workers also won a $100 per year increase in education benefits. The $2.5 million education fund is administered by a joint union-management committee.

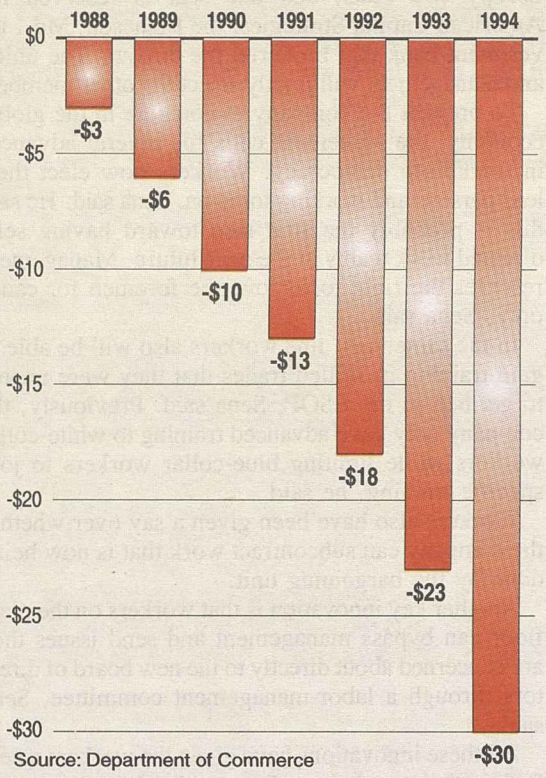
ECONOMY

DATA

U.S. Merchandise Trade Imbalance With China

(1988 - 1994)

In billions of U.S. dollars



Source: Department of Commerce

The U.S. merchandise trade deficit with China widened by 30 percent to nearly $30 billion in 1994. Most of the near-record $151.1 billion U.S. trade deficit in goods last year came in dealings with China and Japan, whose exports into the United States outstripped imports from this country by $65.7 billion.

Merchandise Trade Deficit	
December	$11.4 billion
1994	$151.1 billion

Median Weekly Earnings (Constant 1982 Dollars)	
Fourth Quarter 1994	$304
Fourth Quarter 1993	$312

AFL-CIO NEWSGRAFIC

Asian imports sink trade balance

Council calls for U.S. policy that defends Americans

By David Kameras

The U.S. merchandise trade deficit in 1994 hit a near-record $151.1 billion, a 31 percent increase over the $115.6 billion shortfall in 1993 and nearly double the $84.5 billion recorded in 1992. The pattern is clear.

"In the past 10 years, the total of U.S. trade deficits has exceeded $1 trillion," the AFL-CIO Executive Council said during its meeting in Bal Harbour, Fla. "This persistent pattern has contributed significantly to declining real wages and to increasing job insecurity."

The federation called for a "vigorous American trade policy that defends the interests of the great majority of people within our borders."

The ballooning trade deficit "underscores the failure of current government trade policy, and demonstrates that new approaches are desperately needed to reverse this nation's persistent trade imbalance," said Mark Anderson, director of the AFL-CIO Task Force on Trade.

Most of the merchandise trade deficit came in dealings with Japan and China. U.S. exports to Japan were $65.7 billion less than imports from that country, up from $59.4 billion in 1993, an 11 percent gain. The deficit with China was up 30 percent, from $22.8 billion in 1993 to $29.5 billion in 1994. Both set new records.

The council pointed out that Japan, China and "most other countries manage trade and investment to their own advantage, regardless of market dictates. The United States is virtually the only country in the world that exposes its industrial base to unlimited erosion by imports."

Japan, in particular, has restricted outside investment. "Investment leads trade," said AFL-CIO economist Greg Woodhead. "Until we can invest in Japan, we can never close that gap."

The council called for "real trade reciprocity and trade deficit reduction. Otherwise, the United States will experience even more destructive trade deficits and greater loss of good jobs."

The council also recommended linking U.S. trade with International Labor Organization standards on forced labor, employment discrimination, child labor and the right to organize and bargain collectively.

In a letter to members of Congress, AFL-CIO Legislative Director Peggy Taylor pointed out that the percentage of manufactured goods as a portion of the overall trade deficit is increasing. "It was 54 percent in 1980 and it is presently 84 percent. This is a very disturbing trend," she said.

When services are added into the mix, the trade deficit grew by a whopping 43 percent last year.

> *"New approaches are desperately needed to reverse this nation's persistent trade imbalance."*
>
> **— Mark Anderson**
> **AFL-CIO Task Force on Trade**

The December trade deficit in goods was $11.4 billion, a decline of $3.1 billion from the November figure. Imports of goods were $59.1 billion and exports were $46.7 billion. For the year, the U.S. imported a record $663.7 billion worth of goods.

From November to December, increases in goods exports were led by capital goods, automotive vehicles, parts and engines, industrial supplies and materials and foods, feeds and beverages, while exports in consumer and other goods decreased. Decreased imports were registered in the same categories that enjoyed increased exports.

Last year was marked by implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement, which was billed as an export-driven U.S. job creator. Instead, the traditional bilateral trade surplus in goods with Mexico actually dipped into the red during some months before being nudged back to a minuscule $19 million surplus in December. For the year, the trade surplus shrank from $1.67 billion to $1.4 billion.

Most of the worsening in the trade picture with Mexico took place before the free fall of the peso that occurred in December. Now that U.S.-made products are up to 50 percent more expensive south of the border than they were a year ago, it is unlikely that a trade surplus can be maintained.

"Administration and congressional leaders of both parties show eagerness to address the federal budget deficit," the council noted in its statement. "Yet the trade deficit goes largely ignored except for efforts to increase exports — despite the certain knowledge that we cannot 'export' our way out of this huge deficit."

UAW President Owen Bieber said that advocates of so-called "free trade" are deluding themselves by concentrating on exports without considering the rapid increase in imports.

"It's like there's a basketball game between the Pistons and Bulls, which I missed," he said. "The next day I look in the paper and it says, 'Pistons 76,' and nothing else. They're missing half the score."

Boost sought for low-wage workers

By Muriel H. Cooper

Low-wage workers provide essential services — washing, cleaning, building, clothing and feeding. Yet, many cannot provide these same services for their own families.

That's why the minimum wage must be increased and workers' basic rights safeguarded, concluded participants in a Feb. 16-17 conference in Washington that included the U.S. Department of Labor and representatives from several unions and community coalitions.

Many of these low-wage workers are underpaid and others are cheated out of hard-earned wages, several union representatives noted.

"A lot of the immigrants don't understand labor laws governing the workplace," said May Chin, assistant education director for Ladies' Garment Workers Local 23-25 in New York City. "We have to educate them on how to read paychecks, how to know what deductions are being taken out of their checks and how to identify the boss."

"We see the same problem in the cleaning industry," said a Service Employees member. "The industry manipulates the law to their own interest. We hear so many hopeless stories."

A Machinist from Dallas told about how he and 6,000 fellow unionists, after losing their good full-time jobs, "are now low-waged workers. We want to improve our lives."

This wage erosion and job insecurity is infecting more and more workers, even though more jobs were created last year than in any calendar year for the decade. Many of those jobs are minimum wage jobs, or temporary or part-time positions.

The deterioration of the minimum wage exacerbates the problem, the conference was told. When adjusted for inflation, the value of the federal minimum wage has fallen by nearly 50 cents since 1991. A worker making the minimum wage of $4.25 an hour is really receiving $3.75, compared with 1991.

Union workers tend to fare better all the way around. "Unions empower workers," said Lora Jo Foo of the Asian Law Caucus, noting that unions in the service industry have been able to negotiate prevailing wages similar to those in the construction field, besides providing the protection and benefits of a union contract.

"We have fallen woefully behind in our national aim to make work pay," said Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich, calling for an increase in the minimum wage.

Reich challenged House Majority Leader Richard Armey (R-Texas) to a debate on the merits of the minimum wage, noting that Armey had made the "outrageous" claim that the wage floor should be abandoned altogether.

"The members of Congress who don't want to give these workers a raise are attempting a strategy of myth over math," he said. "If their welfare plan was 'Boy's Town,' their minimum wage policy is 'Pulp Fiction.'"

Wage stagnation linked to unionization decline

Despite economic growth that approached 4 percent in 1994, most workers have not seen increases in their real wages, according to Laura D'Andrea Tyson, who chairs President Clinton's Council of Economic Advisers.

In addition, a moribund minimum wage and declining unionization also have contributed to the drop in real wages, Tyson reported in the Economic Report of the President. The contraction of union membership from 26 percent of all workers in 1973 to 16 percent today accounts "for about one-fifth" of the drop.

The report added that reduced demand for less-skilled and less-educated workers, also a contributor to stagnant incomes, is partially due to "a shift in employment away from goods-producing sectors that disproportionately provided high-wage opportunities for blue-collar men, and toward medical, business and other services that disproportionately employ college graduates and women."

The report also noted that cooperative workplaces, marked by problem-solving teams, worker training and greater job security, showed significant improvements in quality and productivity. In a comparison of four steel production lines, the report found that the two with cooperative programs ran 98 percent of scheduled time and produced higher quality steel.

UNION NEWS

Nurse jobs defended

Since U.S. hospitals continue to downsize through staff cuts, a law to admit foreign nurses to work at U.S. hospitals should be allowed to expire, AFSCME said in a letter to the Department of Labor.

A commission composed mostly of hospital administrators is seeking a renewal of the law, but labor representatives filed a minority report opposing the move, said Jack Golodner, president of the AFL-CIO Department of Professional Employees.

AFSCME, which represents more than 40,000 registered nurses and licensed practical nurses, argued in its letter that "the current trend in RN education, hiring and utilization suggests that the 1989 INRA has outlived its usefulness."

UAW locals stick together

UAW locals in North Carolina and South Carolina are building union awareness among members who are besieged by employers' anti-labor, right-to-work messages.

For the past 15 months, UAW Locals 5841, 4927 and 5285 at Mack Trucks, Freightliner and Metal Leve have held training classes and sponsored projects for members of the UAW North/South Carolina Education Council.

Willard Beck, education chair for UAW Local 5841, said the council was formed because "in this right-to-work region, new locals need all the help they can get to maintain their foothold in the South."

NALC food drive set

The 1995 Letter Carriers Food Drive will be held May 13, NALC President Vincent Sombrotto told the Executive Council. Donations are expected to exceed the record 32 million pounds of food delivered to community food banks and pantries last year.

Letter Carriers will pick up an extra load as they deliver mail along their postal routes, collecting cans and boxes of non-perishable food left by postal customers near their mailboxes.

This is the third year that the drive has been held on a national basis. It is conducted in cooperation with the U.S. Postal Service, AFL-CIO Department of Community Services and the United Way of America and local United Way agencies.

IBT helps kill 'poison pill'

Representatives of the Teamster pension funds won a three-year battle for shareholder power when Phillip Morris Co. agreed to eliminate its "poison pill" anti-takeover plan.

The pension funds, which hold 3.4 million shares of Phillip Morris, had sought to end the provision and make management more responsive to shareholders. As long as the plan was in place, management was entrenched and insulated from shareholder reform, the union said.

"In negotiating this settlement, the funds are achieving a new standard in corporate governance," said William Patterson, director of IBT's office of corporate affairs, who helped negotiate the agreement. "The day is gone when a company can silence shareholders simply by waving a dividend check in front of them. Institutional investors demand involvement in the long-term strategic planning."

Executive pay challenged

The Communications Workers are supporting an Electrical Workers resolution to GTE stockholders that would tie cash compensation for executives to the average percentage pay increases granted to GTE employees.

The non-binding resolution suggests that the GTE board of directors take steps "to implement a plan which would limit the total annual cash compensation of GTE executive officers." Compensation would not be increased by more than the average percentage pay increase granted to GTE employees annually."

CWA Telecommunications Vice President T.O. Moses said the unions want to join the debate over "excessive salaries, bonuses and incentives granted to senior executive officers in America."

IBEW's proposal is intended "to assure shareholders and employees that GTE's hard-earned profits will be used for research and development, equipment modernization and other endeavors."



Steve Yarmola/AFL-CIO News

House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.) attempts to improve the reportedly poor nautical skills of retiring AFL-CIO Legislative Director Robert M. McGlotten, presenting him with a set of navigational charts, as Gephardt aide Michael Wessel looks on. McGlotten was saluted by every congressional visitor to the Executive Council meeting in Bal Harbour, Fla., as well as Vice President Al Gore, prompting AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland to wonder aloud if his longtime legislative aide had set it all up.

NEWSMAKERS

Hermes Ruiz succeeded **Miles Nekolny** as president of the Novelty and Production Workers on March 1. Ruiz, a labor activist for almost three decades, will fill the unexpired term until the ANP convention in May 1996. Nekolny, president since 1991, resigned for health and other personal reasons.

President Clinton has named **Steve Protulis** as a member of the Advisory Committee for the 1995 White House Conference on Aging. Protulis is the coordinator of senior affairs for the AFL-CIO COPE Department. The committee will provide advice for planning, conducting and agenda of the White House conference.

Leslie Loble of the Communications Workers has been named chief of staff for the Labor Department. Loble has worked in a variety of roles during her two-year tenure at the department. Prior to joining DoL, she spent a decade at CWA, where she worked on health care reform, social policy and telecommunications issues.

AWARD

Flight Attendant **Richard DeMary** was awarded the Transportation Department's Heroism Award for his life-saving actions after the crash of USAir Flight 1016 near Raleigh, N.C., last July. DeMary carried a flight attendant out of the burning aircraft, and then rescued a 23-month-old child and two other passengers. The AFA member also is credited with helping the captain move the first officer clear of the plane, as well as assisting in the rescue of other passengers from the wreckage.

DEATHS

Charles J. Coyle, secretary-treasurer of the Letter Carriers, died after a brief illness. He was 60.

Coyle had served only two months as NALC secretary-treasurer at the time of his death. He was elected in October to fill the post held previously by **Richard P. O'Connell,** who retired.

Prior to his election, Coyle served for 16 years as the national business agent for the union's St. Louis region.

"His passing is a great loss for the entire membership of the NALC," said union President Vincent R. Sombrotto. "Charlie was a union leader of great dedication and integrity."

Coyle is survived by his wife, Marilyn; three daughters; three sons; and seven brothers and sisters.

Ike Gold, Rubber Workers secretary-treasurer from 1960 to 1978, died in Akron, Ohio. He was 82.

Called a "living legend" by the late URW President Peter Bommaritto at the time of Gold's retirement, Gold served for eight consecutive terms as secretary-treasurer, serving longer than any other URW officer from the organization's 1935 founding until that time.

His service continued as president of the URW Council of Retirement Clubs, a position he held until he resigned for personal reasons in 1992.

Gold joined the union in 1942 and served as a committeeman, negotiation committee secretary, division chairman, vice president and president for Local 7.

Gold's survivors include his wife of 57 years, Getrude; two sons; six grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

— Compiled by Muriel H. Cooper

RESOURCES

CAMPAIGN

The AFL-CIO has prepared an education packet to promote discussion of the issue of pay equity during March, **International Women's Month,** and for activities March 8, International Women's Day. The packet includes sample public service announcements, a poster, fact sheets on pay equity, sample union actions on pay equity, a question-and-answer sheet, suggested workshop format and a quiz on pay equity. The package is available through the AFL-CIO Reproductions and Mailings Division, 815 16th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

PUBLICATION

The Family and Medical Leave Act: What You Need to Know... is a 14-page booklet published by the Communications Workers Education and Legal departments. Copies are 10 cents each. FAX orders to CWA Facilities Services at 202/434-1379.

TRAINING

The 1995 **Hispanic Workers Leadership Institute,** sponsored by the University of Michigan Labor Studies Center, will be held April 20-22 at the Plaza Hotel in Southfield. The registration fee is $180. Contact Elise Bryant at 313/764-0492.

Free training courses in **Hazardous Waste Cleanup,** Radiological Contamination Cleanup and Transportation Awareness Hazardous Material Handling are available to members of the Teamsters. The courses are provided under a federal government grant in locations throughout the country. For more information, contact the IBT Safety and Health Department at 202/624-6963.

Needle trades agree to UNITE

Continued from Page 1

Manufacturers' Association in which employers pledge they will not knowingly be part of exploitation of workers overseas. ACTWU won a groundbreaking partnership with Levi-Strauss and Co. to reorganize the workplace in Levi's North American distribution centers and factories.

But perhaps the foremost legacy of ACTWU and ILGWU is in the nurturing of other unions, particularly in the industrial organizing efforts in the 1930s and 1940s. The Steelworkers and others received ACTWU assistance, and a Seafarers training ship is named after Charles F. Zimmerman of the ILGWU.

Some of the same problems that workers faced earlier this century have re-emerged. Department of Labor inspectors are finding child labor, exploitation of immigrants and the coarsest of wage chiseling — all employer practices that Americans thought had been put behind this nation.

"The re-emergence of sweatshops and the unbridled union-busting of countless employers, large and small, in recent years will be met by a powerful and aggressive organizing drive by UNITE," said Mazur.

"We are merging from strength," said Sheinkman. "In today's global arena, we need creative responses to corporate power so that we can raise living standards for workers. This means aggressive organizing, new forms of labor-management relations and strategic targeting of resources."

ACTWU Secretary-Treasurer Arthur R. Loevy would hold the same office in UNITE, with Bruce S. Raynor of ACTWU and Edgar Romney of ILGWU named as executive vice presidents. Raynor and Romney would share responsibility for organizing, which Mazur described as UNITE's first priority. A $10 million fund has been set aside to launch that drive.

The ILGWU was founded in 1900 by workers in the women's and children's apparel industries. ACTWU was founded in 1914 to organize men's clothing workers industrywide.

"We intend to build on the kind of structures we've always had," Mazur said. "We have a great deal to look forward to."



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

Food and Commercial Workers President Douglas Dority makes a point during the Executive Council meeting. Listening are Gloria Johnson, vice president of the Electronic Workers, John Sturdivant, president of the Government Employees, and John J. Barry, president of the Electrical Workers.

AFL-CIO to review organizing role

Continued from Page 5

petitions filed throughout the country by their local organizers. The department also maintains a database of more than 400 union busters.

"The ability of sharing information around the country gives a stronger meaning to the term 'inoculation,' allowing organizers and organizing committees to have a complete understanding of tactics and strategies waged by an employer and union buster during a campaign," Sweeney said.

Organizing efforts last year resulted in 1,314 election victories that allowed 70,775 workers to become union members, he reported. Among key victories:

- The Laborers won an election for 400 workers at Smithfield Packing Co. in Kinston, N.C.
- OCAW won an election at BP Exploration Corp., an oil production company, for 243 workers in North Slope, Alaska.
- The Mine Workers will represent 161 workers at C&K Co. in Claring, Pa.
- The Carpenters added 175 workers at ACS Investors in Flora, Miss.
- Lincoln University's 85 cafeteria and food service workers voted for the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees.
- GCIU won an election for 58 workers at Marlowe Graphics, a printing company in St. Louis.
- The Clothing and Textile Workers organized 300 workers at AEM Corp., a Bolivar, Ohio, cable plastics firm.
- The UAW in Ohio won elections with five different employers over a six-week period, bringing a total of 1,000 workers into the union fold.
- The IAM won an election for 490 workers at Owing-Brockway, a plastic container factory in Bandalia, Ill.
- The Rubber Workers organized 800 workers at Westke Corp. in Thompson, Ga.
- The USWA won an election for 130 workers at Ardco, a glass display door company in Alsip, Ill.
- The AFT organized 655 workers at Ryder Transportation, a student transportation company in Kansas City, Mo.
- The Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union won an election for 70 workers at the Inland Book Co., in East Haven, Conn.
- The IBT is on a roll in a city-by-city campaign to organize 14,000 Overnite Transportation workers.
- SEIU organized 5,675 home-care workers in Alameda County, Calif., by a 10-to-1 margin.

Olympic committee gets Pony Express appeal

The Atlanta Committee on the Olympic Games should insist that Borg-Warner Security Corp., which it has contracted with to provide security for the 1996 games, ensure the rights of all its employees, the AFL-CIO Executive Council declared.

Pony Express, a Borg-Warner subsidiary, has refused to bargain with the Teamsters even though some 4,000 drivers at the courier service voted for representation two years ago.

The council pointed to the Olympic ideals of "fair play and honorable competition," saying that the "company's shameful employment policies make a mockery of the Olympics' values."

More than 100 charges of unfair labor practices by Pony Express are pending before the National Labor Relations Board.

AFL-CIO efforts to assist the Teamsters were detailed to the council in a report of the AFL-CIO Strategic Approaches Committee. The campaign has included outreach to veterans and the religious community for appeals to Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf, who serves on the board of Borg-Warner.

AFL-CIO NEWS

VOLUME 40, NUMBER 5 MARCH 6, 1995

INSIDE



2 **Some 5,000** trade unionists crowd the Indiana state Capitol to rally against repeal of the state's prevailing wage law. Workers also mobilized in other states, where so-called "right-to-work" bills led a parade of anti-union initiatives.

LEGISLATION

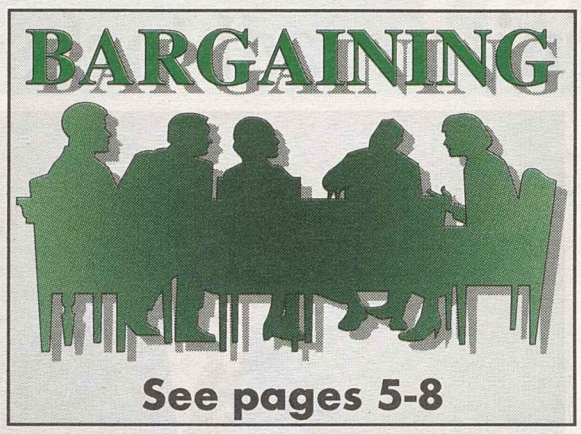
3 *Budget amendment: 'Contract' stops here?*

UNION YES

3/6/95

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See pages 5-8

AFL-CIO NEWS

VOLUME 40, NUMBER 6

MARCH 20, 1995

Clinton bars strikebreaker contractors



AP photo

President Clinton signs executive order as Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich, AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland, Vice President Gore and AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Thomas R. Donahue look on.

Democratic filibuster kills GOP repeal effort

By James B. Parks

President Clinton's executive order banning federal contracts with companies that permanently replace strikers survived its first congressional challenge, but organized labor was braced for further Republican assaults.

The fight was sure to be continued in the Senate, where labor and the White House held on to enough Democratic allies to maintain a filibuster against an amendment to kill the order. That amendment to a defense appropriations bill was withdrawn March 15 by Majority Leader Robert Dole (R-Kan.) and its sponsor, Sen. Nancy L. Kassebaum (R-Kan.), after they gained only 58 of the 60 votes needed to end debate.

The executive order, outlined Feb. 20 to the Executive Council by Vice President Gore and signed by President Clinton March 8, ''sets a strong moral tone for labor-management cooperation and for dignity for those who work,'' AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland said.

Kirkland saluted the Senate refusal to overturn the executive order as a ''victory for working families. Working Americans simply will not believe all of the talk about 'workplace cooperation and partnerships' from the same people who defend the permanent replacement of strikers.''

The president has full authority to issue the order, Attorney General Janet Reno stated in a memorandum to Kassebaum, under the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act. Clinton could act, she said, after he found that ''as a general matter, economy and efficiency in procurement are advanced by contracting with employers that do not permanently replace lawfully striking workers.''

But the U.S. Chamber of Commerce filed suit March 15 seeking an injunction to stop enforcement of the executive order. Joining the lawsuit were the National Association of Manufacturers, the American Trucking Associations, the Labor Policy Association and Bridgestone-Firestone, a Japanese-owned company that has sought to permanently replace its striking U.S. workers.

Speaking with reporters after the signing at the White House, Kirkland noted the irony of Republicans who now are howling about congressional prerogatives but who were silent when President Bush used executive orders against pre-hire agreements and to require contractors to post notices that workers do not have to join unions.

''This order sends a message to all Americans that quality products cannot be turned out by employers

Continued on Page 12

Federal partnerships take hold

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

The Clinton administration's national partnership with federal workers is taking hold throughout the executive branch of government, according to an Office of Personnel Management survey of government agencies.

Of approximately 1.4 million bargaining unit employees, about 53 percent are represented by partnership councils. Twenty of the 21 major agencies, which employ 96 percent of federal bargaining unit employees, have partnership councils and agreements.

The importance of these partnerships to the Clinton administration was made clear by OPM Director James B. King at the recent meeting of the AFL-CIO Public Employee Department executive council.

''No element of reinvention is more important or more basic than the labor-management partnership that thousands of people are working to create all across the government,'' said King. ''Frankly, partnership is the foundation of reinvention.''

King is chairman of the National Partnership Council, whose members include John N. Sturdivant, president of the Government Employees, and John F. Leyden, secretary-treasurer of the PED.

Last month, employees at the Naval Air Systems Command created the first Department of Defense command-level partnership involving multiple unions. NAVAIR won the prestigious Presidential Award for Quality in 1994 for its reinvention efforts, which improved services to its customers at reduced rates and with higher employee morale and productivity.

The new headquarters-level partnership includes workers represented by AFGE, Fire Fighters, Machinists, Professional and Technical Engineers, Police Officers and several unaffiliated unions.

Members of AFGE Local 1151, who are employed by the Veterans Administration Regional Office in New York City, received the Silver Hammer Award from Vice President Gore for ''tremendously'' reducing case backlog.

In their partnership agreement with management, coordinators replaced supervisors in the team process and members of the teams make decisions together.

Continued on Page 11

Unions ride information superhighway in AT&T talks

By James B. Parks

For the two unions involved in this year's biggest contract negotiation, the future on the information superhighway is now.

The Communications Workers and the Electrical Workers, set to begin joint bargaining with AT&T April 3, will use the AFL-CIO's LaborNET electronic information system to keep members informed of the progress. It is the most extensive use yet of the increasingly popular computer service.

Fast communication will be essential because the bargaining will deal with some potentially contentious issues, the unions said. A highly profitable company, AT&T made about $5 billion in profits in the last year, CWA spokesman Jeff Miller said, and workers who created the profit deserve to share it.

The CWA, which represents some 95,000 AT&T employees, is particularly looking for employment security and assurances that current workers will be able to get jobs in new entities as the company expands or buys other businesses, Miller said.

IBEW expressed concern about the company's expanded use of outsourcing. About 85 percent of the 20,000 IBEW members at AT&T work in manufacturing, where most of the contracting out occurs, union spokesman Jim Spellane said. The practice ''undercuts job security and takes jobs away from union members,'' he said.

Pension benefits are another important issue for the IBEW, Spellane said. Even though the AT&T pension system is well funded, current retirees have not had an increase in benefit payments since 1991, he said. The union would like to have some of that money spent on current and future retirees, he said.

As negotiations proceed, CWA will plug in members from some 400 locals through the LaborNET. The union traditionally has provided regular bargaining information through 800 numbers and electronic bulletin boards, Miller said, ''but LaborNET gives us an even better, more advanced way to communicate.''

IBEW locals will not be on line in time for the

Continued on Page 2

Trust and respect key to partnerships in public safety

Trust and respect must be restored between public safety workers and management to achieve real partnerships, union representatives told a federal task force.

''If workers are excluded from participation, the result will be resistance, hostility and, ultimately, turmoil,'' Fire Fighters President Alfred K. Whitehead said. But if management and labor work together, ''we can accomplish truly amazing things.''

Whitehead testified before the Secretary of Labor's Task Force on Excellence in State and Local Government through Labor-Management Cooperation, along with Robert Kliesmet, president of the Police Associations; Lovely Billups, director of field services for AFT; Nancy Mill, coordinator for worker participation programs at the Service Employees; and Joseph Puma and Larry Spivack, representing AFSCME district councils in New York state and Chicago, respectively.



Whitehead

Current problems, they all agreed, stem from years of antagonistic labor-management relations that have fostered mistrust.

''If workers, through their elected leadership in unions, are able to participate in the decisions that affect their lives, they will become willing partners in implementing the necessary changes,'' Whitehead said.

Kliesmet explained how the current system of policing was created during the 1920s and 1930s, based on the military model of ''do as you are told.'' But the time has come for the private and public sector to realize that ''real change will not occur without street-level law enforcement officer input,'' he said.

This was the third meeting of the task force, which was created to investigate labor-management relations in state and local government.

— Sharolyn A. Rosier

NLRB busts Overnite roadblocks

By Muriel H. Cooper

Overnite Transportation Co. is putting up illegal roadblocks to Teamsters' organizing campaigns, the National Labor Relations Board has charged, delaying representation elections at two terminals.

The IBT organizing campaign, the largest in private industry in many years, has election petitions at 20 Overnite facilities in just the month of March. The union already has won elections at eight of the 170 terminals nationwide, where some 9,000 drivers are eligible to vote.

The NLRB complaints cite the company's Cincinnati facility for violating a number of federal labor laws, including firing an employee for supporting the union, questioning workers about their private views and opinions and restraining employees from exercising their legal rights.

Similar complaints have been reported by workers at several Overnite facilities, including the Kentucky sites in Louisville, Lexington and London.

Representation elections were scheduled March 15 in Lexington and London, the ninth and 10th sites that have sought the union.

The NLRB calls for elections to be delayed when it finds conduct that would ''have a tendency to interfere with the free choice of the employees...''

Workers in the Lexington terminal have cited more than 30 incidents in which the company used threats and illegal tactics to intimidate employees from joining the union.

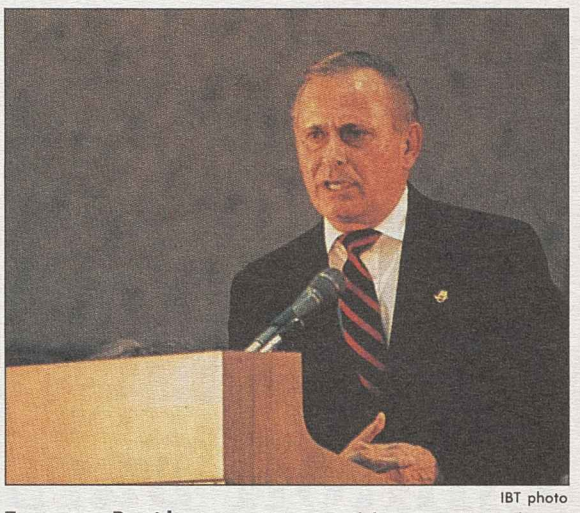
''It's not right for the company to threaten us — all we want is a fair election,'' said Ed Bowman, an Overnite employee in Lexington. ''The company shouldn't be threatening employees who want a union to improve conditions and get the respect we deserve.''

Overnite is the nation's largest non-union trucking firm providing LTL (less-than-truckload) service. It provides the lowest wages among major LTL carriers, giving top drivers about $15 a hour, with very little overtime pay. Under the IBT's recent master freight agreement, drivers will gain $3.20 an hour more in wages and benefits over four years, adding to the current rate of $17.51 an hour.

To fight off the IBT organizing campaign and maintain its status quo, the company appears willing to use any means.

Overnite illegally fired an employee in Grand Rapids, Mich., for supporting the union, an unfair labor practice repeated in other cities, the union charged in a filing with the NLRB.

The Grand Rapids firing backfired when ''undecided'' employees came over to the union side after watching company officials punish the union supporter.



IBT photo

Teamsters President Ron Carey addresses "Truckers Unite Rally" in Louisville, Ky.

''Every freight worker knows what's wrong with the industry, especially those who are not in a union,'' said Teamsters President Ron Carey during a trucker rally in Louisville.

''You are working harder and driving more miles,'' he said. ''You are spending more time away from your families and worried about retirement. It's time for action, it's time to organize, it's time for truckers to unite.''

About 1,500 angry freight drivers, many of them from Overnite, attended the March 11 Louisville rally to talk about the poor benefits, fatigue and safety problems that plague the industry.

''It was a good chance for union and non-union drivers to talk about the standards in the industry,'' said IBT spokesman Craig Merrilees.

The Overnite organizing victories have used IBT's ''worker-to-worker,'' a style of campaigning begun last year. Union truckers used CB radios to send messages and set up meetings in local truck rest stops and restaurants to extol the virtues of the union.

''By the end of the fall we had a lot of legitimate contacts of people who wanted to organize,'' said organizer Jeff Zack. ''We realize the value of the 'worker-to-worker' approach and it's reflected in the interest from non-union drivers.'' The union has added about 1,100 workers to its rolls from Overnite.

''Overnite workers in Grand Rapids refused to be intimidated. They stood up against company threats and voted for a better future,'' said Larry Haisma, an organizer for IBT Local 406.

LaborNET serves as bargaining utility for CWA, IBEW

Continued from Page 1

AT&T negotiations, but the international has sent out a mailing to 1,400 locals, urging them to ''get wired as soon as possible,'' Spellane said.

CWA will have two sectors on the network, a message board and a library, said Blair Calton, the AFL-CIO's field automation coordinator. When the negotiations start, bargaining messages will be put in the library as needed, with locals able to pick up the information and distribute it to members. Members can use the message board to ask questions of the negotiators, make comments and check rumors.

When talks begin in June with seven regional Bell operating companies, CWA field negotiators will post messages from each of the negotiations, Miller said.

After negotiations are completed, the CWA and IBEW intend to set up permanent systems to communicate with members on LaborNET.

CWA and IBEW are deeply involved in the creation of the new information superhighway and in the policies surrounding it. AT&T is helping to drive the technology, and its workers, mainly IBEW in manufacturing and CWA in operations, will be crucial to the success of their efforts.

CWA President Morton Bahr chairs the AFL-CIO Committee on National Information Infrastructure, and also is a member, along with Jack Golodner of the Professional Employees Department, of the federal board advising on the development of information technology. IBEW President John J. Barry serves on the AFL-CIO committee.

This is not the first time LaborNET has been used to keep track of contract talks, Calton said. The Wire Service Guild, a local of The Newspaper Guild, used LaborNET to post messages about its negotiations with the Associated Press.

LaborNET was designed primarily to facilitate communications among the AFL-CIO, state and local central bodies and affiliated unions. But its popularity has skyrocketed as more unions have become aware that it offers a much more efficient and economical way of communicating with locals, Calton said.

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Director of Information: Rex Hardesty

Editor: Michael Byrne

Assistant Editors: Candice Johnson, David Kameras, James B. Parks

Staff Writers: Muriel H. Cooper, Mike Hall, Colleen M. O'Neill, Sharolyn A. Rosier

Graphics/layout: Stan Hitt

AFL-CIO Headquarters: 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006
Telephone: (202) 637-5010
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GOP bill robs children, poor to favor fat cats

OSHA cuts a threat to standards, inspections

By Colleen M. O'Neill

House Republicans bent on deregulating at the expense of workers' safety and health approved a nearly $20 million cut in the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's current funding, as well as a $5 million cut in the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, OSHA's research arm.

The OSHA rescissions, part of a massive legislative assault on workplace safety and health regulations, include a $3.5 million cut offered in a last-minute amendment by Rep. Tom DeLay (R-Texas) that would stymie work on an ergonomics standard.

Many other standards could be delayed and agency workers could even be furloughed as a result of the cuts, the AFL-CIO warned. The rescissions, which were approved by the full House March 16, also affect enforcement, hiring and targeted training grants.

The ergonomics standard is seen by labor as a pressing need for the nation's workers, who have suffered a 770 percent increase in the incidence of illness and injury related to ergonomic factors over the past decade.

The assault on regulations that protect workers includes House-passed measures requiring the use of cost-benefit analysis and risk assessments in major rule-makings. The legislation also would give new powers to the Office of Management and Budget to scuttle regulations when that agency questions the accompanying analyses.

Also sent to the Senate for action is the regulatory moratorium measure, which would set aside legislation enacted after November 20, 1994, and potentially suspend work on any pending rules.

A separate measure still under consideration in the House, H.R. 994, would mandate that existing regulations expire after seven years unless reauthorized by an agency and approved by Congress, while new rules would expire in three years without subsequent reauthorization.

Action on safety and health measures is heating up on the Senate side as well, with the full body set to consider S. 219, its version of the moratorium, during the week of March 20. It was passed out of the Governmental Affairs Committee March 9 on a 6-5 vote.

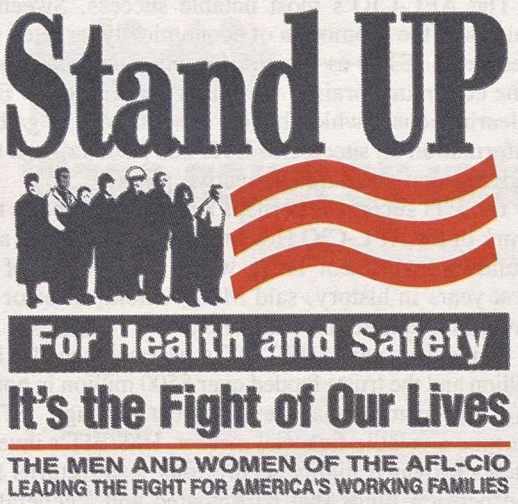
Separate regulatory reform measures introduced by Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole (R-Kan.) and Sen. William V. Roth Jr. (R-Del.) are set for markup by the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee March 21. Dole's bill, S. 343, also was marked up March 14 by a Senate Judiciary subcommittee, which sent it to the full committee without recommendation. A hearing on that measure was scheduled for March 17.

Finally, the misnamed OSHA ''reform'' measures — more accurately, the OSHA-gutting measures — are slowly trickling forth from both houses. A House subcommittee held a hearing March 8 to look at consultation vs. enforcement, the establishment of an independent standard-setting board, penalties and OSHA's need to obtain a warrant.

The chair of that panel, Rep. Cass Ballenger (R-N.C.), is expected to introduce a ''reform'' bill by the end of March, with a focus on requiring OSHA to give one day's notice before inspections and precluding the agency from issuing fines for first-time offenses.

Sen. Judd Gregg (R-N.H.) has introduced ''The Occupational Safety and Health Amendments of 1995,'' S. 526, to permit the establishment of labor-management safety and health committees, set requirements for risk assessment and cost-benefit analysis, cap and prohibit certain penalties, and prohibit the use of OSHA's egregious policy penalty. No hearings have been scheduled.

The Citizens for Sensible Safeguards coalition, of which the AFL-CIO is a part, has moved its attention to the action in the Senate, especially the regulatory moratorium and reform measures. President Clinton indicated he's likely to veto the regulatory moratorium measure, so the key question is whether Senate proponents can muster 67 votes on S. 219 to make it veto-proof.



April 28 spotlight will show brutal legislative assault

The 7th annual observance of Workers Memorial Day this April 28 may be the most important observance yet — an imperative to stand up for workplace health and safety, now under siege on Capitol Hill.

''This year we face challenges as never before,'' said AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland in a letter to activists. ''The new Republican Congress has launched an all-out assault on worker safety and health. They want to stop new protections and make compliance with the law voluntary. If they succeed, thousands more American workers will be killed or injured on the job.

''This year as we observe Workers Memorial Day, we must fight as never before to protect American workers,'' he said. ''We must organize to stop the Republican Congress from taking important worker protections away.''

Already, the GOP assault on America has yielded House passage — in committee or on the floor — of several legislative measures to strip away workers' health and safety on the job, including reduced funding for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, a moratorium on regulations and a requirement for risk assessment and cost-benefit analysis for new rules.

Activists in the field were sent materials the first week of March to assist in publicizing the observance, and in organizing activities and events. Included in the kit were the letter from Kirkland, a fact sheet, poster, camera-ready ad and clip art, a flier, mock-up of stickers, ''Stand UP for Safety and Health'' petition, a Workers Memorial Day event report form and an order form for materials.

Activities planned by unions and federations at the local and state level include petition and letter-writing campaigns, call-ins to congressional offices during lunch and breaks on the job, public meetings, moments of silence, rallies, marches, memorial services, letters to the editor, call-ins to radio talk shows and paid newspaper advertisements.

Materials may be ordered from: AFL-CIO Workers Memorial Day, 815 16th Street N.W., Room 704, Washington, D.C. 20006; phone 202/637-5367; FAX 202/508-6978.

In addition, local unions can spotlight their community observances with a public service announcement prepared by the Labor Institute of Public Affairs for broadcast by local television stations. It makes the point through lit candles that every five seconds a worker is killed, injured or made sick on the job, and asks Americans to remember the victims on Workers Memorial Day.

Trade unionists who line up stations to use it can get copies by contacting LIPA at 202/637-5334.

— Colleen M. O'Neill

By Mike Hall

After weeks of lofty rhetoric about their economic agenda, House Republicans enacted some of the mean-spirited measures they have advocated for years — tax breaks for business and the rich paid for by cutbacks in programs to help children, workers, the poor and the elderly.

The House March 16 approved a $17 billion rescission package, which would kill spending for mainly social programs already approved for this year's budget, while beginning the process of giving a $189 billion tax break to the wealthy. Republican leaders promised this is just a preview of what's to come.

The legislation ''has defined quite clearly who they think are no longer worthy of government services: kids and the elderly poor,'' AFL-CIO Legislative Director Peggy Taylor said in a letter to the House.

Education programs took a $2 billion hit in the takebacks. ''Cutting back on education now would be like trying to cut back the defense budget in the toughest days of the Cold War,'' President Clinton said. ''Our security now is going to be determined in large measure on whether we can develop the capacity of all our people to learn for a lifetime.''

The Republican cuts would deny funds for 4,000 public schools to increase standards and provide better teaching through the Goals 2000 program. In addition, funds previously used by 94 percent of all districts to keep drugs out of the nation's schools were eliminated. The bill also would deprive some 100,000 educationally disadvantaged children of special services in schools.

The Department of Labor had $2.9 billion taken from its budget. A portion of that money had been earmarked for its enforcement staff, including OSHA inspectors, who already were woefully understaffed. Some $2.4 million was snatched back from DOL's Wage and Hour Division, which monitors Davis-Bacon compliance.

Other programs that suffered funding cuts included fuel assistance to help the elderly and poor with high winter heating bills; a program to help older workers in poverty find part-time community service jobs; a program aimed at helping all senior citizens from being victimized by so-called ''medi-gap'' insurance scams; medical equipment and facilities improvement at VA hospitals; prenatal care for mothers; supplemental food programs for expectant mothers and newborns; and programs for summer jobs, youth job training and Job Corps.

On the tax cuts, the Republican-led Ways and Means Committee, on a straight party-line vote, approved a $189 billion package of tax cuts, with 20 percent of the benefit going to taxpayers making more than $200,000 a year and virtually nothing aimed at families earning $20,000 a year.

Rep. Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader, noted that the bill funnels about $3,800 a year in tax benefits to an executive earning $200,000, but only $5.52 to a working family earning $20,000.

''Republicans are willing to ravage commitments to struggling working families to fund a powerful new perk for the privileged,'' he said.

Republicans have promised to offset any tax cuts with an equal amount of spending cuts. Those cuts, Taylor said, are ''going to be paid for by additional cuts in programs that benefit kids, the elderly and workers.''

The tax bill also would cut capital gains taxes, in some cases by half, phase out the alternative minimum tax for corporations and expand tax write-offs for businesses.

The bill is expected on the House floor by the end of March.

Elsewhere on Capitol Hill:

FEDERAL PENSIONS — In a rare victory for workers, the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee backed off a proposal to increase federal employees' contributions to the Civil Service and Federal Employees retirement systems, while at the same time decreasing benefits.

The measure would have cost a federal worker between $600 and $1,000 a year and upward to $28,000 during the course of the average retirement.

But House GOP leaders delayed the committee's action when they realized several Republican members would not support the proposal. Democrats charged that the projected savings would be used for promised tax cuts for businesses and the wealthy.

Public, private pensions face growing threats

By James B. Parks

Recent attacks on Social Security and further undermining of private pensions are major concerns of organized labor, the AFL-CIO Executive Council was told at its February meeting.

Those items will top the agenda when the federation's pension investment committee meets in April with Assistant Labor Secretary Olena Berg of the Pension Benefit and Welfare Administration, said Service Employees President John J. Sweeney, who chairs the committee.

The AFL-CIO is particularly concerned about the recent attack on Social Security from a bipartisan Entitlement Commission, whose leadership proposed diverting 1.5 percent of payroll tax to individual IRAs. This push follows trends toward individualizing private pensions, Sweeney said.

Although pension coverage has stagnated, there is an increase in defined contribution plans instead of the preferred defined benefit plans, he added.

The federation also will address the growing power of pension funds in the financial markets, Sweeney said. Pension funds next year will be a larger source of capital than credit unions and commercial banks, replacing traditional sources of banking for small firms and real estate development.

"We have to question the implications of Wall Street absorbing credit that once went to Main Street," he said.

The AFL-CIO's most notable success, Sweeney said, was the promotion of economically targeted investments (ETIs) as vehicles for union pension funds. The committee praised the Labor Department's ETI Clearinghouse, which begins this summer to gather information on successful ETIs and issue criteria for judging non-standard innovative plans.

The ETI success is perhaps best exemplified in the work of the AFL-CIO Housing Investment Trust and Building Investment Trust, which enjoyed one of its best years in history, said Mike Arnold, director of investor relations for HIT/BIT.

In the last year, HIT/BIT's assets reached $1.3 billion and the trusts funded over $500 million in housing and commercial development through ETIs. Despite a volatile financial market, HIT/BIT's investments provided highly secure long-term returns for the pension funds that participated and "generated employment that is improving the quality of life for union workers and their neighbors," Arnold said.

New investment by union pension plans in HIT reached a record level for one year — $130 million — and contributed to an 11 percent increase in the trust's total assets.

HIT also funded 24 new housing projects, ranging from high-rise family apartments to housing for senior citizens to single-family homes. Among some of the projects were Crittenden Court, a $13 million, 17-story apartment building with 208 units in downtown Cleveland financed in partnership with the City of Cleveland and The Ohio Carpenters' Pension Fund; Manhattan West, a 1,000-unit New York complex for tenants with a range of incomes; and a demonstration mortgage program in San Jose.

BIT purchased the Veterans Affairs building in St. Louis after financing construction. The trust also is involved in the construction of a retail shopping center in Brea, Calif.; an office building to be leased by the Internal Revenue Service in St. Louis; and the National Archives building in Philadelphia. Construction soon will begin at the Olney Village Mart in Montgomery County, Md., which BIT purchased last year.

Aging conference will highlight Social Security

By Colleen M. O'Neill

The issues of Social Security and Medicare will take center stage at the fourth White House Conference on Aging May 2-5 at the Washington Hilton.

Many union retirees will be among the more than 2,250 delegates from the United States, territories and the District of Columbia, Machinists President George Kourpias told the AFL-CIO Executive Council in February.

"This is an important conference, particularly because of the direct threat to Social Security posed by the Republican majority in Congress," said Kourpias, who chairs the council committee on older and retired union members. He reported on the progress of state and local AFL-CIOs in establishing retiree councils considered critical in bringing the approximately 13.6 million union retirees into political action.

Steve Protulis of the federation's COPE department has been named by President Clinton as a member of the advisory committee for the White House conference. That panel is charged with providing advice for planning and conducting the gathering.

The conference — "America Now and Into the 21st Century: Generations Aging Together with Independence, Opportunity and Dignity" — will seek to craft a national aging policy for the next decade and a strategy for enacting that policy, officials said.

Delegates are to examine four broad issues: assuring comprehensive health care, including long-term care; promoting economic security; maximizing housing and support service options; and maximizing options for quality of life.

Of key concern to conference participants is the interdependence among generations and members of extended families, along with the responsibility of individuals to plan for changes throughout their lives, as well as documenting the unique contributions and needs of veterans, caregivers, the elderly, women, minorities and those with disabilities.

The first White House Conference on Aging took place in 1961, although there were several national meetings held during the 1950s. Legislation passed in the wake of that first conference includes Social Security amendments, the Housing Act of 1961, the Community Health Facilities Act of 1961, Medicare, Medicaid and Titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act in 1965 and the Older Americans Act.

Subsequent aging conferences took place in 1971 and 1981.

There are 10 satellite locations for the conference. They are: Rhode Island Convention Center, Providence; Meadowlands Hilton, East Rutherford, N.J.; Convention Center, Pittsburgh; Universal Studios, Orlando, Fla.; The Citiplace Convention Center, Dallas; University of Arkansas, Little Rock; University of California at Los Angeles; San Diego Convention Center; California Exposition, Sacramento; and Convention Center, Kansas City, Mo.



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

OSHA Assistant Secretary Joseph Dear, left, talks with nuring home workers who were joined by Service Employees President John J. Sweeney in presenting a new study on the dangers of working in nursing homes. At right is Denise Lane, a worker at Haida Manor Nursing Home in Elmora, Pa.

Nursing homes 'most dangerous job'

By Muriel H. Cooper

Working in nursing homes not only is the fastest-growing occupation in the United States but is becoming the most dangerous job as well, a new study reveals.

"Caring Till It Hurts," a report by the Service Employees, reveals that nursing homes in the past decade have outstripped construction, mining and trucking in the dangers they present to workers.

The report was presented March 15 to Joseph Dear, director of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and to members of Congress, including Rep. William F. Goodling (R-Pa.), who has led the charge in the House to cut OSHA protections.

SEIU President John J. Sweeney, who accompanied a group of nursing home workers on the tour of the Labor Department and Capitol Hill, said the study presents a compelling case of the need for a federal ergonomics standard to protect workers.

Back injuries are the most common type of injury suffered by nursing home workers, accounting for 43 percent of all injuries in nursing homes. Nurse aides, who provide most of the patient care in these homes, are particularly at risk.

"An ergonomics standard would provide clear guidance to nursing home employers on how to prevent disabling strain and sprain injuries," the report stated.

The standard should include worksite analysis to identify risk factors that cause injuries, a method to reduce those factors, early treatment programs for injured workers and preventive injury training.

The study also found that:

- Nursing home workers are injured at a rate of more than 17 percent a year — double that of private-sector workers generally.
- Occupational illness and injury rates for these workers increased by 55 percent between 1983 and 1993.
- The number of lost workdays per 100 full-time nursing home workers has doubled in the last decade.

While Medicaid and Medicare pay the bulk of nursing home care, taxpayers actually end up forking over about three-fourths of $1 billion for workers' compensation premiums, $1.2 billion for treating preventable bedsores and $2.6 billion for treating residents injured in falls, SEIU reported.

Much of these costs are preventable. The report recommends that OSHA enforcement powers be increased and that nursing homes improve their staffing standards.

AFL-CIO seeks reliable statistics on unpaid work

In order to be fair to women, the AFL-CIO declared the nation should develop "detailed, reliable data" on unpaid work.

In adopting a substitute for a resolution referred to it by the 1993 convention, the Executive Council said women are primarily affected because they "perform most unremunerated work in the form of family care and household maintenance."

The resolution said such national statistics are necessary "to aid in arbitration and litigation regarding death, divorce, child support, alimony and division of property." The resolution was one of three handled in a February report to the council by its Referred Resolutions Committee chaired by Secretary-Treasurer Thomas R. Donahue.

The committee said two other resolutions — on passage of the Workplace Fairness Act and on organizing — were rendered moot by subsequent events.

The committee recommended holding a fourth resolution, on a national labor channel on cable TV, for further review.

Settlements lag despite economic growth

By Robert Wozniak

Union workers countered employers' cut-and-run strategy with determination and ingenuity in 1994 — achieving some solid contracts in spite of the situation. But collective bargaining settlements generally were weak, despite stable consumer prices and increasing worker productivity.

The relatively quiet collective bargaining year in 1994 contrasts sharply with the 1995 calender — the heaviest in 11 years.

Using "global competition" as the pretext for "re-engineering," employers kept the pressure on by cutting payrolls and contracting out. Job security remained a top issue in both the private and public sectors, where the sting of downsizing and contracting out was compounded by a new rush to privatize services and to risk public funds in market schemes.

Although the U.S. economy enjoyed a post-recession upswing, expansion was modest by historical standards and productivity increases did not translate into real wage gains for American workers. American businesses sought either to shift production overseas or push wages and benefits down to global rates, and continued expansion of part-time and contingent employment.

The economic climate also was dampened by a number of public policy decisions that hurt workers. The U.S. merchandise trade deficit widened dramatically under the U.S. addiction to "free trade," a goal that no other nation took seriously. The Federal Reserve, meanwhile, raised short-term interest rates seven times over 12 months, even though inflation was nowhere in sight. Such increases slow down economic growth and ignore the plight of millions of unemployed and underemployed Americans.

Still, innovative agreements enabled workers and their unions to win important provisions that often do not show up in standard analyses of wages and benefits. Many new contracts negotiated in 1994 improved employment and income security and increased employee involvement in workplace decisions.

This trend toward cooperative arrangements was hailed in February 1994 in the landmark AFL-CIO report, "The New American Workplace: A Labor Perspective." The report outlines the essentials of union-management cooperation in redesigning work environments and calls on "labor and management to surmount past enmities and to forge the kind of partnerships that can generate more productive, humane and democratic systems of work organization."

A murky economic picture

According to most conventional indicators, the domestic economic situation improved in 1994, with Gross Domestic Product expanding at an inflation-adjusted rate of 4 percent — a full percentage point better than 1993 and the strongest performance since 1987.

The official unemployment rate dipped to 5.4 percent in December, the lowest rate in more than four years. The average unemployment rate for the year was 6.1 percent, while inflation was a modest 2.7 percent.

Economic growth is not expected to continue at the same pace in 1995, however, because of the barrage of recent interest rate increases by the Federal Reserve. An employer faced with economic uncertainty will be reluctant to enter into long-term commitments and will be more likely to use contingent workers, demand more overtime from full-time employees and propose lump-sum payments in place of wage increases. Higher interest rates also mean employers will be reluctant to invest in human and capital resources.

Employment opportunities increased in 1994, but the quality of new jobs remains questionable. According to payroll surveys conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, net job growth was 3.5 million for the year, an increase of roughly 3 percent. However, job growth was very uneven: jobs grew only 1.6 percent in manufacturing, compared with 5.2 percent in services and 4 percent in retail trades.

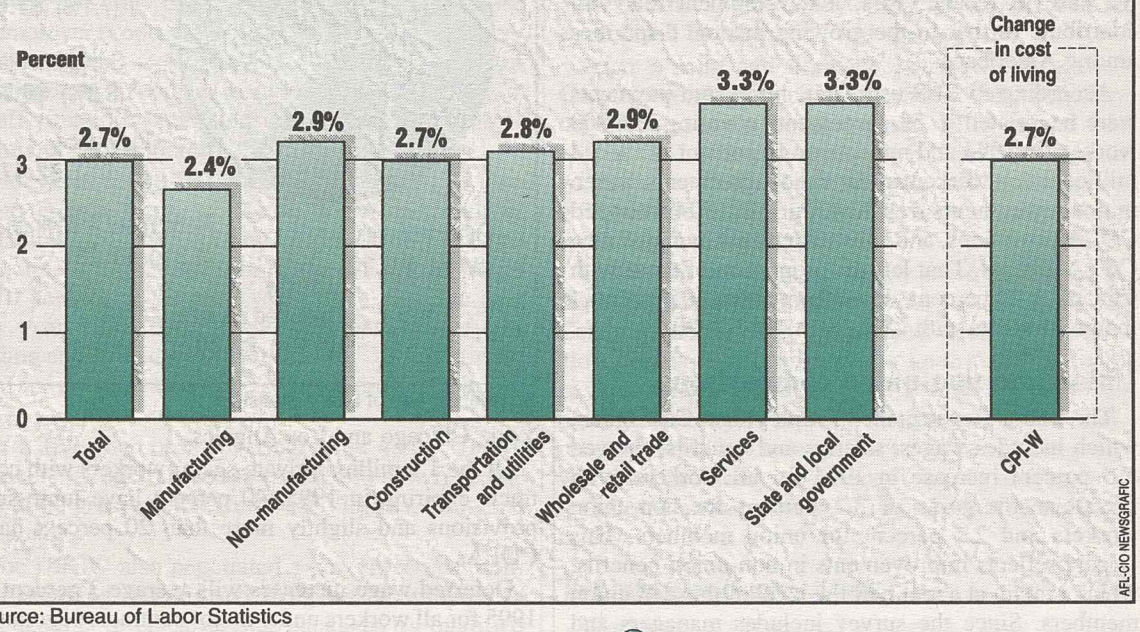
Meanwhile, "personnel services," the category for short-term contract employees, grew a whopping 20 percent. Manpower Inc. is now the nation's largest employer.

Robert Wozniak is the 1994-95 research associate in the AFL-CIO Economic Research Department.



Wage gains by industry

Average wage rate increases for all workers under major contracts (1994)



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Major issues in 1994 negotiations

The cheerful illusion created by standard economic barometers did not trickle down to the bargaining table in 1994. Employers demanded concessions from wage earners, while CEO salaries and benefits remained at ungainly levels. An increase of 10 percent in corporate sales produced a stunning 42 percent increase in profits but only a 2.8 percent increase in private-sector wages and salaries.

Numerous businesses pursued a short-sighted strategy of reducing work forces and demanding more mandatory overtime, contributing to a stressful and often brutal work environment.

In some cases, unions successfully brought an end to unreasonable employer demands, as did the UAW in Flint, Mich., where General Motors agreed to hire 750 new full-time employees, eliminate several hundred temporary employees and implement an ergonomics program to curb repetitive motion injuries. Several additional GM plants followed suit.

Virtually every union in 1994 bargaining had to confront the threat of unnecessary job losses. Several unions, including the Teamsters, the Food and Commercial Workers and the Service Employees, successfully negotiated limits on part-time employees.

Health care coverage remained a priority for union negotiators, especially after the 1994 congressional failure to act on health care reform. Latest BLS data on insurance benefits (life, health and accident) show union members have insurance benefits costing $2.46 an hour, compared with $1.03 per hour for non-union workers.

Several 1994 agreements called for full union participation in decision-making and long-term job security. Growing numbers of unions and employers are attempting to jointly address important issues facing both parties, althought such cooperative agreements affect only a tiny percentage of workplaces and some of the showcases of the past now have collapsed.

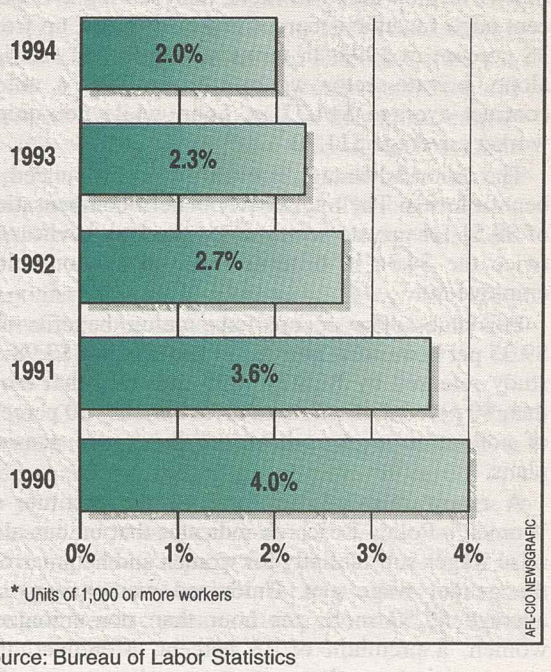
Education and training programs have grown along with economic uncertainty. "Labor's Key Role in Workplace Training," a 1994 AFL-CIO report, discusses the increased frequency of training and education provisions in union contracts and the benefits these programs offer to both workers and employers.

Other top bargaining priorities in 1994 included employer pension contributions; employee ownership and involvement initiatives; and protection of past achievements, such as cost-of-living adjustments and pay equity provisions.



First-year wage gains

In major* private-sector collective bargaining agreements



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Wage adjustments

Modest wage gains show the difficulties of bargaining in 1994. Major settlements in private industry, defined by BLS as 1,000 or more workers, produced average wage and compensation increases of 2 percent in the first year and 2.3 percent over the life of the contract (excluding COLAs and lump-sum payments). In 1993, the comparable increases were 2.3 percent in the first year and 2.1 percent over the term of the contracts.

Some of the new pacts negotiated in 1994 called for "backloaded" wage gains, where the increases come primarily in the final years of the agreement. Ninety percent of affected workers in major 1994 private-sector contracts got wage increases, 7 percent received no wage change and 3 percent actually received decreases.

Major agreements covering state and local government workers increased wages an average of 2.7 percent for the first year and 3 percent annually over the term of the contracts.

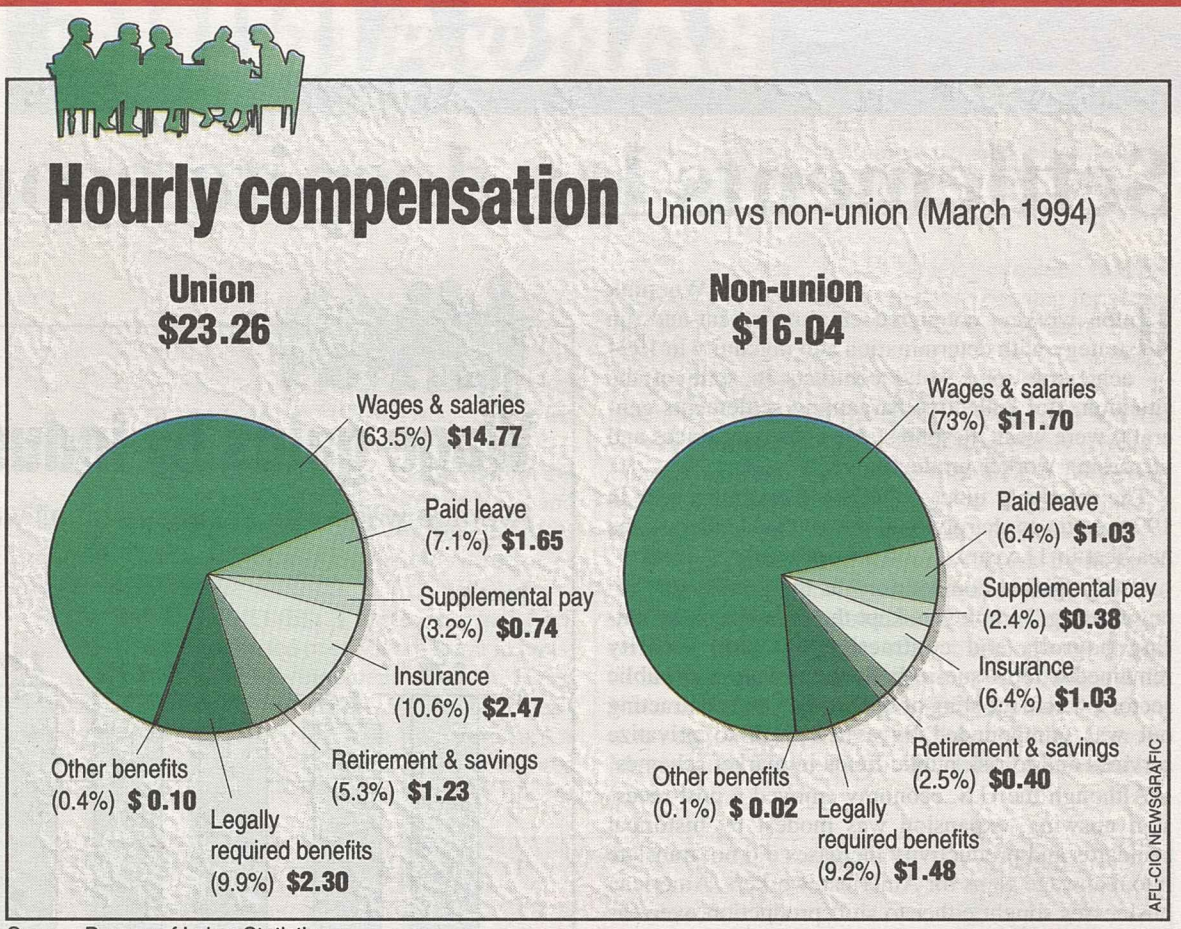
Data for the first six months of 1994 show that contracts negotiated for these public employees with COLA provisions on average will increase wages 2.7 percent in the first year and 2.5 percent over the life of the agreement. The corresponding increases for

contracts with lump-sum payments are 2.2 percent and 2.1 percent respectively.

When changes from previous settlements and COLAs are added to 1994 settlements, wage rates for all the estimated 5.4 million workers under major private industry contracts increased an average of 2.7 percent, just keeping up with inflation. For the 2.8 million state and local government workers covered by major settlements, wage rates increased an average of 3.3 percent in 1994.

With private-sector business productivity increasing 2.3 percent during 1994 and corporate profits soaring, the modest wage gains negotiated in new contracts cannot be explained by employer hardships. In the past, private-sector employers generally have been willing to share higher profits with their workers by increasing wages. Unfortunately, this has not been the case in recent years, a development that will contribute further to the growing income disparities among Americans.

According to BLS estimates, lump-sum payments were negotiated in 53 agreements covering 236,000 workers in 1994 and now cover 42 percent of the 5.4 million union workers under major agreements. Seven major agreements reached during 1994 dropped COLA provisions, and four settlements included new COLA clauses. That left the proportion of those with COLAs at 24 percent, down from about 40 percent of major contracts with COLAs in 1987-1990.



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Union and non-union comparisons

The Labor Department's Employment Cost Index, which includes wages, salaries and benefits, showed a 3 percent increase in 1994 for all workers, with private-sector gains of 3.1 percent for non-union workers and 2.7 percent for union members. This largely reflects improvements in non-union benefits, which remain at about half the level of those of union members. Since the survey includes managers and supervisors, non-union gains may be overstated.

Union wages and salaries increased more than non-union, 2.9 percent to 2.7 percent, but benefit costs increased 2.4 percent for union employers and 4.2 percent for non-union employers.

The real union advantage is clear from data released by BLS earlier in 1994. Total hourly compensation in the private sector was $23.26 for union members and $16.04 for non-union workers, representing a 45 percent edge for union-represented employees, up from 38 percent in 1993. In terms of wages and salaries alone, private-sector workers covered by a union contract average $14.77 an hour, while non-union workers average $11.70.

The union advantage is even more pronounced in benefit levels. The total hourly benefit compensation of $8.51 for private-sector union workers is virtually twice the $4.34 in benefits received by non-union employees.

For blue-collar occupations, union benefits are $9.35 per hour, with non-union benefits just $3.98. A study released by BLS in 1994 indicated that more than 80 percent of union workers but only 40 percent of non-union workers have employer-paid pension plans.

A report released last year by the Institute of Women's Policy Research indicates that unions also raise wages substantially for women and help narrow the gender wage gap. Unionized women earn on average $2.50 more per hour than non-unionized women, a premium of 38 percent. Moreover, the compensation gap between men and women is 25 percent greater in non-union workplaces.

Outlook for 1995

The big bargaining year of 1995 will include contracts covering some 3.4 million workers. Those negotiations will affect 42 percent of all workers under major agreements in private industry and state and local government.

In the private sector, nearly 2 million workers, or 35 percent of those under major agreements, will be engaged in collective bargaining. About 80 percent of these workers, or 1.5 million, are in non-manufacturing industries, primarily construction, communications, retail trades and railroads. Of the 375,000 manufacturing workers scheduled to renegotiate in 1995, 40 percent are concentrated in transportation equipment production, primarily aerospace.

State and local government union members will be even busier, with contracts expiring for 56 percent of the 2.8 million workers under major agreements. About 70 percent of the 790,000 affected state employees are in New York, New Jersey, Florida and California, while about half of the 720,000 affected city and local government employees are in New York, Chicago and Los Angeles.

Of the 1.9 million private-sector workers with contracts expiring in 1995, 40 percent have lump-sum provisions and slightly more than 20 percent have COLAs.

Deferred wage increases will average 3 percent in 1995 for all workers under major contracts negotiated in previous years. For private-sector union workers, the deferred wage gains will average 3.1 percent, while state and local government employees are scheduled for wage increases averaging 2.8 percent.

Several legislative initiatives being considered in 1995 may have an impact on negotiations, such as increases in the minimum wage; changes in overtime rules, which could result in longer hours for less pay; reform or elimination of prevailing wage laws; "right-to-work" initiatives in several states; loosening of health and safety regulations; and federal labor law legislation to weaken the ban on company unions.

Innovations in cooperation

Contract settlements reached in 1994 reflect continued emphasis on such non-economic issues as employment and income security, expanded recognition, organizing rights and neutrality agreements, training and education and no-layoff clauses.

Several 1994 agreements overhaul the work environment, increase union-management cooperation pledges and provide strong employment and union security provisions.

A three-year settlement between the Machinists and Bath Iron Works centers on increased cooperation and significantly increases union and job security for some 5,300 employees. The union is recognized as an equal partner and workers will have a greater say in all workplace decisions except disciplinary actions. Pay increases will be tied to new skills and the settlement establishes a new "team" concept of labor-management cooperation through joint committees.

Employees are protected from layoffs during the term of the contract, though reductions may occur through attrition. The company expects improvements in flexibility, efficiency and competitiveness by linking pay raises to training that enhances employees' ability to perform a variety of tasks.

The Clothing and Textile Workers negotiated a deal with Levi Strauss that gives workers a greater voice in decision-making while improving productivity and competitiveness. In a neutrality agreement, the company agreed not to oppose any new organizing efforts by ACTWU and, in return, the company is asking union help to revamp the production system.

Major agreements reached last year by the Steelworkers generally followed the pattern of cooperation established in the steel industry in recent years. A 66-month contract covering 15,000 workers at USX Corp. allows the union to appoint a member to the board of directors and calls for full employee involvement in the company's decision-making process.

In the event of a severe business downturn, layoffs may occur, but affected workers will receive supplemental unemployment benefits of about $475 per week until recall. Other provisions call for company neutrality in organizing efforts and card-check recognition; a new managed health care plan; and scaling back or elimination of certain work rules.

A five-year agreement reached by USWA with LTV Corp. provides essentially the same coverage for about 14,000 production and maintenance workers in six states. A managed health plan and union representation on the board of directors already were established in the previous LTV contract. All the current major steel contracts call for union-management cooperation in rebuilding a pool of trade and craft employees, as well as joint participation in strategic studies of the steel industry.

The Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers signed a new agreement with Nabisco Inc. that includes five core partnership elements: empowerment, work redesign, changing roles and responsibilities, employment security and rewards.

The contract covers 6,200 workers and represents a renewal of pledges made in 1990. The implementation of that agreement proved difficult at the plant level, so the two sides have agreed to implement changes through a joint committee.

The Government Employees in 1994 were involved in efforts with the Navy and the U.S. Mint to develop long-term strategic goals and bring decision-making down to a more local level. Early reviews from all involved parties have been positive.

The union also is continuing to work closely with the Clinton administration through the National Partnership Council, addressing all aspects of government reform and securing increased employee involvement in key workplace decisions. A key goal of AFGE is to ensure that federal workers are protected from reckless, unilateral management decisions.

With defense cutbacks and increasing pressures to create a more efficient government structure, AFGE is working closely with the executive branch to do more with less. These efforts already have resulted in substantial reductions in the federal work force, generating some $64 billion in savings to taxpayers, and many innovative ways to improve public service. Unfortunately, the new Congress is attempting to imitate the worst elements of private-sector downsizing by forcing much deeper employee cuts, ignoring the progress that has been made.

Since 1990, the National Air Traffic Controllers Association and the Federal Aviation Administration have been working together in establishing Quality Through Partnership — a process that brings joint decision-making to teams of employees and managers. This structure empowers employees to resolve their issues and provides opportunities for individual and organizational changes to occur.

A three-year contract between the UAW and Rockwell International's automotive division includes an operating agreement allowing for redesign of plant operations and cross-training of 1,300 production and maintenance workers in Wisconsin and Ohio. The new provision is aimed at establishing a high-performance work environment with increased efficiency and productivity and guarantees that no employees

will be laid off as result of the new system.

Some 3,000 members of the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees signed an innovative agreement with 12 large San Francisco hotels that contains new provisions for labor-management cooperation. To reduce grievances, the union and management will establish joint problem-solving teams to resolve disputes concerning hotel arbitration. Workers have new rights to raise their concerns with management and employers can modify the contract with union approval. The pact also protects against subcontracting to non-union operations.

Employee ownership

Several important developments took place in 1994 involving employee buyouts of struggling companies. The Worker Ownership Institute was jointly established and funded last year by the USWA and companies that are partly or wholly owned by their members through employee stock ownership plans. The USWA currently represents some 13,500 workers who are majority owners of 16 companies, and 41,000 minority owners of 12 companies.

The latest addition to USWA-owned companies came when the union successfully completed a year-long campaign in Pennsylvania by becoming majority owners of Shenango Inc., the leading producer of ingot molds for the steel industry. The company had filed for bankruptcy in late 1992.

Strong community support led to development of a business plan that included a 53 percent ESOP and funding from state, local, federal and community sources to finance the purchase and start-up costs. Workers agreed to defer one-third of their pay for a maximum of six months to assist the start-up. The company, renamed Sharpsville Quality Products, reopened and shipped its first product early in 1994.

The Electrical Workers negotiated throughout 1994 with Penn Central Corp. on a $16.2 million, five-year leveraged buyout of the company. The deal utilizes a 76 percent ESOP and is the first majority-owned plan in IBEW history. The company, which was renamed Mobil Tool International, Inc., manufactures the only union-made lift bucket trucks in the United States.

In addition to protecting the jobs of some 250 union members in Colorado, the IBEW won a neutrality clause that could result in the organizing of 200 additional employees at two manufacturing plants in Maryland and Indiana. All employees will give up 12 percent of their compensation, with 6 percent coming from bargaining-unit wages.

In the airline industry last year, stockholders approved a $5 billion employee buyout negotiated in 1993 between United Airlines, the Machinists and the Air Line Pilots. The arrangement gives workers a 55 percent stake in the carrier. In addition to seats on the board of directors, employees won the right to name the chief executive officer and will play a role in the start-up of a new shuttle service. The deal covers about 8,000 ALPA pilots and 25,000 IAM members.

Employment and income security

The Communications Workers and IBEW reached early contract extensions with NYNEX, the parent company of the New York and New England telephone companies, incorporating a host of cooperative provisions in an effort to limit job losses and maintain efficiency. A key goal of the unions was to protect bargaining unit jobs as the company announced its intention to cut 16,800 jobs over the next three years, including 12,800 positions represented by CWA and IBEW.

Any employees adversely affected by company downsizing will have, in order, the following options available: voluntary transfer to vacancies in their job classification; early retirement (to be supplemented by additional pensions or Social Security supplements up to age 62); voluntary separation from the company with a severance package; or transfer to jobs within their geographic area. Work that has been subcontracted will be returned and the company will refrain from using temporary employees.

The contracts also provide extensive union security, as NYNEX agreed to recognize the unions voluntarily in the event of any new business startups. The three parties also negotiated a neutrality agreement whereby the company will allow card-check recognition.

In a contract covering 12,000 blue- and white-collar Nassau County employees in New York, AFSCME established a labor-management committee to discuss any new technology that may affect the work force. In addition, a subcontracting committee will meet monthly to determine the effectiveness of current and proposed county initiatives to contract out work that has "historically and exclusively" belonged to the bargaining unit.

Another 8,000 AFSCME members at Hahnemann University Hospital in Philadelphia won several improvements, including 80 percent of pay and health benefits for one year for any employee who loses a job to restructuring.

The IBT, in several 1994 contract settlements, negotiated limits on outsourcing and use of part-time workers, as well as long-term security provisions. In a new four-year National Master Freight Agreement covering some 110,000 members, the union held firm against concessionary demands by the major trucking companies.

In a four-year pact covering some 1,700 members at E.J. Brach Corp., IBT won protections for workers if the company moves production to other facilities or shuts down the Chicago plant. The union avoided an employer proposal to create two tiers of employees doing the same work for very different wages. New language on severance, plantwide seniority rights in layoff situations and extension of recall rights from 12 months to 24 months also were included.

More than 2,000 IBT members employed by Airborne Freight Corp. in Boston, Cleveland, Detroit, Philadelphia, New York and Oakland-San Francisco have a new contract that limits the use of part timers to 10 percent of the total work force over the next four years. The company also agreed to shift the loading and unloading of planes at the Oakland airport from a non-union subsidiary to one represented by the IBT.

In a five-year pact covering some 4,600 UFCW members, Kroger agreed to create 400 new full-time jobs at its grocery stores in West Virginia, Ohio and Kentucky.

The UFCW also negotiated a new three-year contract covering 4,000 Osco Drug Inc. employees in Chicago that offers severance packages for qualified workers if the company closes any facilities. If Osco opens any new stores, 50 percent of the new jobs will be offered to UFCW members.

ACTWU entered into an unprecedented seven-year agreement with Xerox that guarantees pay for the entire life of the contract, even if the plant closes. The job-security provision applies to some 3,850 active members of the bargaining unit at the time of ratification. The pact includes annual COLAs and provides for those currently on layoff to be given pay credit of up to three years of service upon recall.

Approximately 7,000 BCT members will receive expanded job protection under an agreement reached with three of the nation's largest baking companies. Continental Baking, Campbell Taggart Inc. and Interstate Bakeries Corp. agreed to consult with the union over any plans to make substantial changes in existing production processes, machinery or work systems.

A four-year contract for more than 18,000 full-time service trades workers represented by six unions at Walt Disney World includes two measures addressing job security. The Service Employees, UFCW, IBT, HERE, Transportation Communications Union and the Theatrical Stage Employees negotiated the settlement through a coordinated Service Trades Council.

New contract language guarantees 70 percent of the bargaining unit will get 35 hours of work per week, up from 30 hours. The unions also held the line against more subcontracting and got a company pledge to find positions for employees laid off as a result of subcontracting.

A coordinated bargaining committee led by the IBEW, Electronic Workers, Carpenters, IAM and USWA achieved a four-year contract with Westinghouse Electric Corp. that renews a $7,500 bonus to employees who voluntarily retire at a time of permanent job loss.

Plan participants will receive a week's pay for the first five years of credited service and one-and-a-half week's pay for each additional year of service, up to a maximum 50-weeks pay. Participants will also be reimbursed for education and training.

After a long and dramatic struggle, the Ladies' Garment Workers reached agreement with Leslie Fay on the company's move overseas. They agreed that 600 of the 1,000 unionized jobs in Pennsylvania will be guaranteed for at least one year and the company will provide a $2.3 million severance package for terminated workers.

SEIU won new income security provisions for more than 1,350 registered nurses at the Swedish Medical Center in Seattle. A new three-year contract creates a "low census fund" that provides up to 6,000 hours of pay for nurses whose hours are reduced when the patient workload is down. The agreement also commits the union and management to resolving ongoing workload problems and creates a joint committee to review and make recommendations on staff utilization issues.

Training and education

Workplace training and education, long a union goal, has become a top priority at the bargaining table.

Some 4,800 Cook County members of AFSCME in Illinois, for example, will benefit from a new Upward Mobility Program aimed at enhancing training and promotional opportunities. In Westchester County, N.Y., 7,000 AFSCME members obtained a three-year contract that increases the tuition reimbursement program from $50,000 to $300,000.

SEIU is actively pursuing strategies to protect members in the health care industry from restructuring, increased use of outpatient care and other changes in delivery systems. In a set of agreements between the union and major city hospitals in Baltimore, employees will have access to new training and retraining programs to be administered by joint labor-management committees at each facility. The contracts also create a supplemental unemployment insurance program.

Another new SEIU contract covering 400 service and maintenance workers at Providence Medical Center in Seattle calls for the establishment of an employer-paid $100,000 training fund.

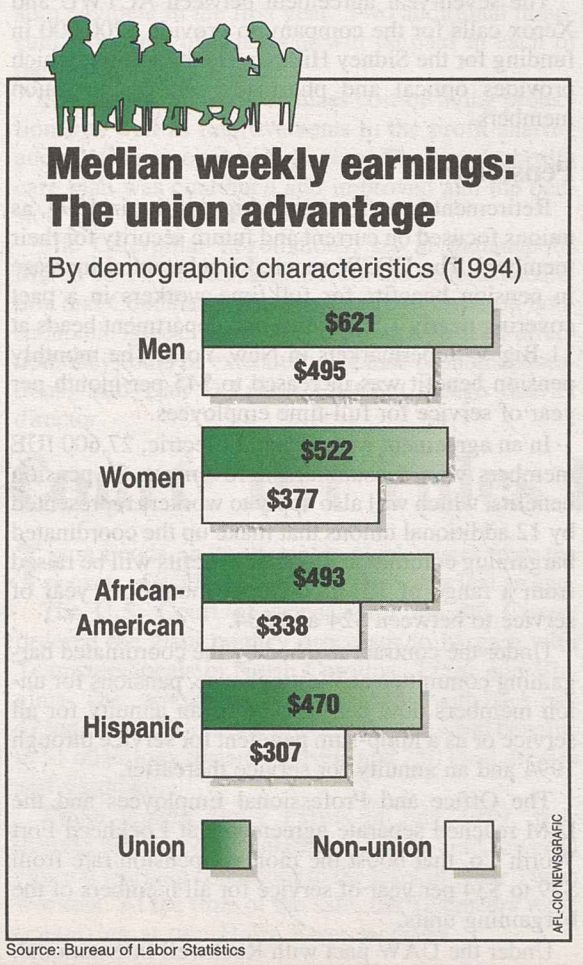
The CWA/IBEW agreements at NYNEX strengthen the training and education provisions, including making employees eligible to enroll in a two-year program leading to an associate degree in telecommunications technology. Participants will attend school on company time one day a week, and retain seniority and benefits for as much as two years of unpaid leave to pursue outside education, including tuition assistance of up to $10,000 per year.

The Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen and the National Carriers Conference Committee, comprising 26 railroad companies, instituted an Advanced Training Program for signal department employees on major railroads across the country. The agreement was the culmination of three years of work by the joint labor-management Advanced Training Committee.

The Mine Workers reached agreements early in 1994 with coal employer associations that established optional skill training programs, allowing workers to be cross-trained to perform all bargaining unit jobs. In addition, employer contributions to the training and education fund were increased from five to nine cents per hour worked.

International labor solidarity

In an economic environment increasingly influenced by overseas markets and divergent international labor standards, solidarity between American unions and their foreign counterparts has become critical. AFL-CIO unions have sought out the assistance of trade unions from around the globe in many organizing and bargaining situations involving foreign-owned U.S. companies. More recently, American unions have focused on helping to improve the com-

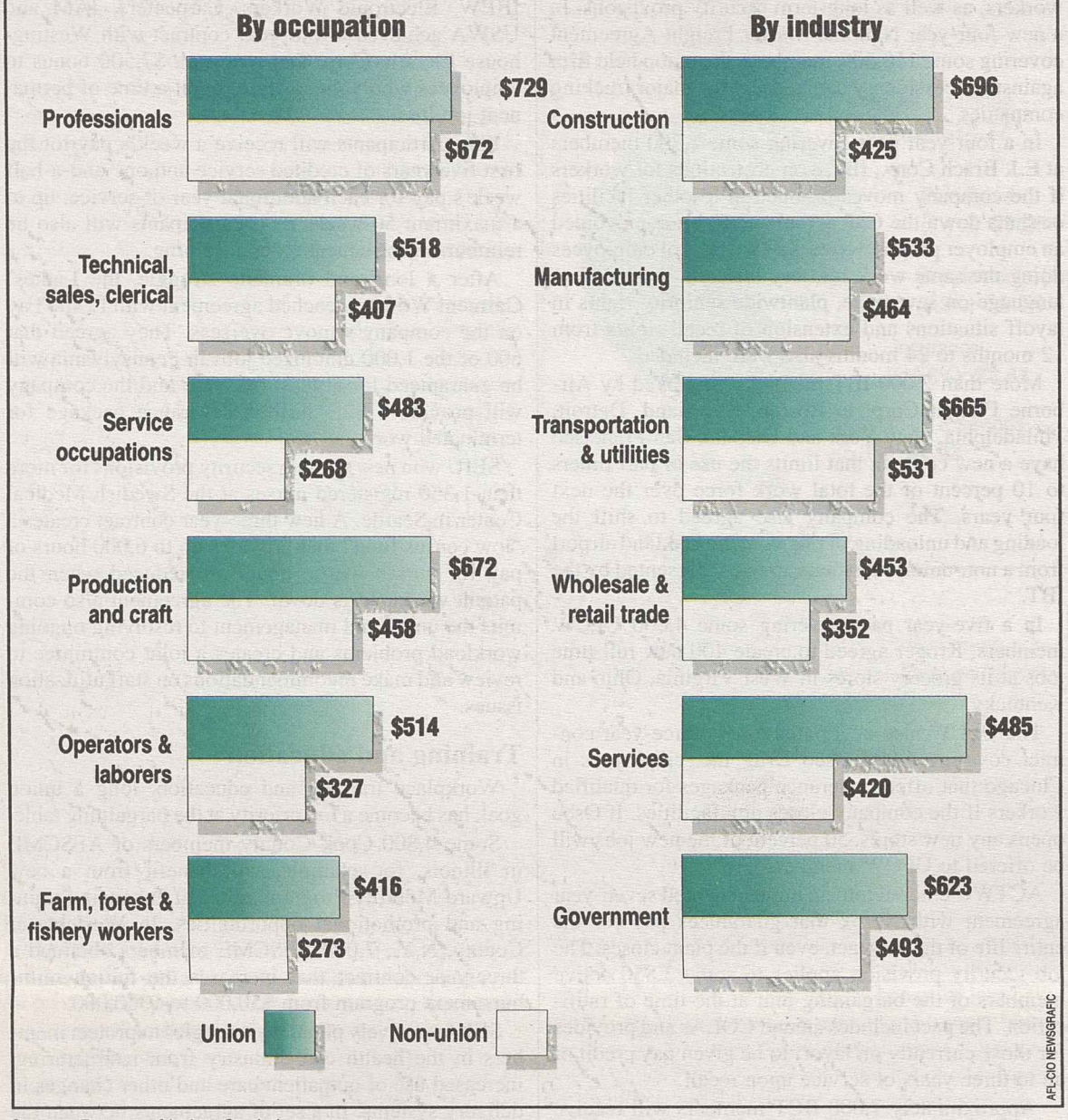


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics



Median weekly pay: The union advantage

Full-time workers by occupation and industry (1994)



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

pensation and working conditions of their brothers and sisters abroad in an effort to cut the incentive for U.S. firms to ship out to low-wage countries abroad.

In Colombia, the UMWA has been assisting a 4,000-member trade union at the El Cerrejon coal mine, 50 percent of which is owned by Exxon. Similar efforts by the UMWA are under way in Russia and Eastern Europe.

The ILGWU and ACTWU teamed up last year to help 4,000 assembly workers in the Dominican Republic secure the first collective bargaining agreements in that country's free trade zones. Similar endeavors are proceeding in Honduras.

Health benefits

With Congress taking a pass on health care reform in 1994 while health care and insurance costs continued to rise, quality health insurance plans are increasingly being targeted for cuts by employers. For 1994, unions continued to retain top-notch coverage for their members.

The new AFSCME pact in Nassau County guarantees employees will not pay any premiums for health insurance through June 30, 1998. The county also will contribute an additional $100 to the dental plan.

The UAW secured a three-year contract with Freightliner in North Carolina that adds a new point-of-service health plan to the existing health maintenance organization and indemnity health plans for approximately 2,000 union employees. The company also will set up a trust fund to pay for premiums of workers who retire on or after Jan. 1, 1995.

Some 3,500 UAW members at New United Motor Manufacturing Inc. in California agreed to a new pact that includes fully paid, lifetime health care coverage for retirees age 65 or over with at least 10 years of service. The coverage also applies to spouses and is consistent with agreements reached in previous years with the Big Three auto manufacturers.

A new contract between Banquet Foods and 2,800 UFCW and IBT members in Arkansas and Missouri includes the option of a traditional indemnity plan and a new preferred provider organization plan. The PPO offers participants lower co-payments, annual deductibles, out-of-pocket expenses and insurance premiums than the indemnity plan.

More than 4,000 CWA-represented graduate and teaching assistants at the State University of New York secured their first contract, winning health care coverage in the process. The plan includes medical and hospital coverage, a prescription drug program and limited vision and dental benefits with annual employee payments of 10 percent of premium costs.

The seven-year agreement between ACTWU and Xerox calls for the company to provide $200,000 in funding for the Sidney Hillman Health Center, which provides optical and pharmacy services to union members.

Pensions

Retirement benefits were a big priority in 1994, as unions focused on current and future security for their members. The UFCW secured a substantial increase in pension benefits for full-time workers in a pact covering nearly 1,300 clerks and department heads at 11 Big V Supermarkets in New York. The monthly pension benefit was increased to $45 per month per year of service for full-time employees.

In an agreement with General Electric, 27,600 IUE members won substantial improvements in pension benefits, which will also apply to workers represented by 12 additional unions that make up the coordinated bargaining committee. Regular benefits will be raised from a range of $21 to $29 per month per year of service to between $24 and $34.

Under the contract reached by the coordinated bargaining committee at Westinghouse, pensions for union members now can be paid as an annuity for all service or as a lump-sum payment for service through 1994 and an annuity for service thereafter.

The Office and Professional Employees and the IAM reached separate agreements at Lockheed Fort Worth Co. that boost the monthly pension rate from $29 to $34 per year of service for all members of the bargaining units.

Under the UAW pact with Rockwell International, the pension formula was increased from $26.25 to $29 per month per year of service. In addition, improvements in the "30-and-out" provision will raise the guaranteed minimum benefit for workers who retire after 30 years of service from $1,650 to $1,925 per month and provide a supplement for younger retirees until they become eligible for Social Security.

Changes in pay formulas

Following the trends toward lump-sum payments and performance-based compensation, the Rubber Workers reached an agreement with Goodyear that puts in place a Performance Recognition Plan awarding cash bonuses based on the company's financial performance. Awards will range from $500 to $1,500.

Many AFL-CIO affiliates have been working to eliminate two-tier wage structures from previous years. The Paperworkers were able to gain significant changes in a two-tier structure at Union Camp Corp. in Franklin, Va. Hourly wages for initial hires were increased from $12.50 to $13.95, while subsequent hires went from $8.50 to $13.05 an hour.

The UAW also was able to revise a two-tier wage plan in a new contract covering some 3,300 workers at Kohler Co. in Wisconsin. New employees still will begin at 85 percent of the current wage but will progress to parity in three years. Previously, new hires progressed to 90 percent after one year and remained at that level. Current employees on the second tier will receive credit for time with the company and automatically move to 100 percent if they have three years of service.

In a new SEIU agreement covering some 3,000 janitors in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, larger wage increases were negotiated for suburban janitors in an effort to bring wage rates more in line with rates earned downtown.

SEIU also eliminated a two-tier wage system in a new contract for 700 service and maintenance workers at the University of Illinois. The previous contract had called for new hires to start at 80 percent of the base wage.

Checkoffs and more

Voluntary political contributions via payroll check-off remain a high priority for AFL-CIO unions as a means of giving their members a stronger voice on legislative issues impacting workers.

SEIU successfully negotiated automatic check-off of voluntary contributions into new contracts with Springfield Public Schools in Illinois and the University of Illinois, as did IUE and IAM at Martin Marietta Corp.

The Newspaper Guild and The New York Times reached a seven-year agreement that secured a flexible work schedule program for employees with child care or family illness problems. In addition, the contract established President's Day and Martin Luther King's birthday as two additional floating holidays and extended benefit coverage to domestic partners.

The Sheet Metal Workers signed a contract with New York contractors that uses creative ways of making union contractors more cost competitive. The wage-and-benefit package includes a 25-cents-an-hour increase in contributions to a joint labor-management fund that will be used to subsidize payments reduced under a new "target" agreement. The parties agreed to an altered benefit schedule on certain projects with heavy non-union competition, with workers eventually being reimbursed from the joint labor-management fund.

About 1,000 USWA members won a first contract with Rheem Manufacturing in Georgia four years after selecting USWA as their bargaining agent. The deal included a signing bonus, wage increases and improved insurance benefits.

A new AFSCME master agreement covering 40,000 state employees in Illinois includes a premium of 4 percent or $75 a month, whichever is greater, for performing duties that require bilingual skills.

The Utility Workers and Dayton Power reached a six-year agreement that offers a new employee stock option plan to 1,600 workers. Company contributions will be $200 per person in the first year and an additional $100 each year, reaching $700 per employee in 1998.

A new IBEW contract with GTE North allows employees to continue to accrue seniority while on leave of absence or layoff. The pact covers maternity, disability and military leaves, among others. In addition, an improved "bridging" provision allows employees who leave the company and then return to be credited for past service after six months rather than the previous five years.

UNION NEWS

URW ends Pirelli strike, talks with Bridgestone

By James B. Parks

Rubber Workers returned to work at Pirelli Armstrong, one of the two struck foreign-owned tire companies where contract negotiations have resumed.

Union negotiators first met with representatives of Bridgestone/Firestone, where some 4,200 workers are still out. The March 13 session in Chicago was the first face-to-face meeting in almost two months between the parties.

Two days later, the union met with officials from Pirelli Armstrong Tire Corp. to hear the company's response to its offer to unconditionally end the strike.

At the last meeting with Bridgestone/Firestone, arranged by U.S. Sen. Paul Simon (D-Ill.), the URW presented a proposal to end the strike. That meeting on Jan. 18 came about two weeks after the company announced it would permanently replace 2,300 of the striking employees.

Before that meeting, the company had steadfastly refused to meet with the strikers. The company changed its mind after pressure and intense criticism from President Clinton, Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich and several members of Congress.

The pressure from the White House has continued. White House Press Secretary Michael McCurry cited Bridgestone/Firestone as an example of a company that could be affected by Clinton's executive order banning federal contracts with companies that hire permanent replacements. **(See story, Page 1.)**

The administration could not nullify contracts entered into before the March 8 order, but could bar the company from renewals and future government contracts, he said.

"We don't want the industrial equivalent of minor leaguers and rookies making tires for the next Desert Storm," McCurry said.

Meanwhile, workers at URW Local 670 in Nashville and Local 703 in Hanford, Calif., returned to work at Pirelli Armstrong plants on March 13. Previously scheduled talks between the union and Pirelli resumed March 15 in Tucson, Ariz.

The union on Feb. 28 unconditionally offered to return to work after the National Labor Relations Board changed the status of the walkout to an unfair labor practices strike. All remaining 850 strikers were recalled by Pirelli, except for some 80 discharged due to alleged strike misconduct. The NLRB will determine the ultimate status of these workers, said Bob G. Long, URW acting coordinator of Pirelli negotiations.

"We are very proud of the members of URW Locals 670 and 703 who have demonstrated great solidarity in this difficult struggle," said URW President Kenneth L. Coss. "We now hope to see this matter resolved in an equitable manner and can hopefully start rebuilding."

Under the law, the remedy for an unfair labor practices strike is good faith collective bargaining, making employees whole for any losses caused by the company's unlawful acts and reinstating the striking employees, according to URW General Counsel Chuck Armstrong.

Had Pirelli refused to let the workers return to work, it would have faced fines of up to $1 million per week.

The top priority at the negotiations will be the terms and conditions of the re-employment of the strikers, Long said. Pirelli has hired 1,200 replacements. Some replacements may remain to fill the 150 vacancies created by strikers who have since retired, the union said.

BARGAINING

Postal mediation set

After failing to reach agreement on new contracts, three postal unions and the U.S. Postal Service are preparing for mediation and possible arbitration.

The Letter Carriers and the USPS began mediation and fact-finding March 1 on a contract for 240,000 postal employees. The Postal Workers, representing 300,000 workers, began its mediation efforts Jan. 30. But the process is not progressing as the union hoped, APWU spokesman Tom Fahey said, indicating the dispute likely will end in arbitration.

If the NALC and the USPS cannot reach an agreement after one month of mediation and fact-finding, both sides have agreed to binding arbitration before a three-member panel.

No decision has been made by the Mailhandlers division of the Laborers on whether to attempt mediation or arbitration in its contract talks.

The three unions and the USPS failed to reach agreement during collective bargaining that ended Nov. 20, the expiration date of the previous agreements.

UFCW, food processor agree

Employees of American Home Foods will receive wage increases totalling 15.5 percent under a new six-year contract.

The contract, ratified March 3 by members of Food and Commercial Workers Local 38, covers some 1,500 employees at the company's Milton, Pa., processing plant. The plant produces products for Chef Boyardee, Polaner jams and jellies, Gulden's mustard and Jiffy Pop popcorn.

Under the agreement, the workers will receive a $375 signing bonus, along with a 2 percent wage increase retroactive to Feb. 6, when the previous contract expired. Wages will increase 2.5 percent each year for the next three years and 3 percent in each of the last two years.

A labor-management partnership will be established to involve employees in strategic planning and shop-floor decision-making. The contract also includes increases in pension benefits and shift differentials.

USWA in Dow pact

The Steelworkers overwhelmingly ratified a new three-year contract with Dow Chemical Co. that compresses grade levels and raises pay.

Under the agreement, 45 pay grades covering about 1,800 employees at the Midland, Mich., plant will be reduced to 10. The covered workers, mostly skilled trades or computer operators, will receive a 2.5 percent pay raise or lump-sum payout. Depending on their new labor grade, some employees will receive as much as a 7 percent increase.

The contract also calls for across-the-board raises of 1 percent in the first year, 3 percent the second year and 2 percent the third year.

Deere pact follows smooth bargaining

UAW members overwhelmingly ratified a new comprehensive national contract with Deere & Co. that provides for lump-sum payments, a signing bonus and continued cost-of-living adjustments.

The cordial negotiations and quick agreement stood in stark contrast with the UAW's difficulties with a Deere competitor, Caterpillar Inc., which forced two strikes in the three-year period since the last Deere accord.

The union was set to resume negotiations with Caterpillar March 16 in the latest effort to settle the current eight-month-old strike.

The three-year Deere contract, ratified March 5, covers about 10,500 workers in Iowa, Illinois, Kansas, Minnesota, Colorado and Georgia.

"The new agreement improves the incomes of Deere workers, provides substantial increases in pensions, provides additional income for retired members and maintains comprehensive health care coverage," said UAW Secretary-Treasurer Bill Casstevens. "It also provides workers with improvements in other important areas, such as health and safety, and group insurance benefits."

The negotiations were "lengthy and tough, but they were conducted throughout in an atmosphere of good faith and mutual respect," said Casstevens, who heads the union's agricultural implement division.

Under the new agreement, workers will receive a $500 ratification bonus as well as a 4 percent lump-sum payment in the first year. Two additional lump-sum payments of 3 percent will be paid in each of the remaining two years.

The agreement also continues cost-of-living protections, as well as improvements in the profit-sharing and 401(k) personal savings plan. The current health care plan was continued and improved and the pension plan rates were increased.

The Caterpillar negotiations, set in Indianapolis March 16-17 with assistance from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, were to focus on non-economic issues. But if talks move in a positive direction, they could be extended to include economic questions, said Dan O'Leary, FMCS Chicago district director.

Union leaders to rally with Decatur strikers

Top officers of the AFL-CIO will travel to Decatur, Ill., March 27 for a major rally in support of some 4,000 workers striking three companies in that town.

Speakers at the event, culminating a month of solidarity rallies in Decatur, include AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland, Secretary-Treasurer Thomas R. Donahue and Vice Presidents George Kourpias of the Machinists, John J. Sweeney of the Service Employees, George Becker of the Steelworkers and James Norton of the Graphic Communications Union, as well as President Kenneth Coss of the Rubber Workers.

The URW has members on strike at the Bridgestone/Firestone plant in Decatur, and the UAW's national strike against Caterpillar also affects a plant in the town. Members of the Paperworkers have been locked out by Staley Manufacturing, a Decatur maker of a corn sweetener.

The last round of negotiations in Louisville, Ky., ended Feb. 3 after both sides made opening statements and then met privately with federal mediators to discuss an agenda and procedures to be used in the talks.

"We welcome this return to the bargaining table," the union said. "Our negotiating team will be in Indianapolis prepared for serious discussions aimed at narrowing the differences between the parties."

Some 14,000 UAW members at eight plants in Illinois, Pennsylvania and Colorado walked out June 21 over unfair labor practices. They originally walked out Nov. 3, 1991, with the expiration of the previous contract. Caterpillar unilaterally imposed their contract terms when the strikers returned in April 1992.

The current strike is the longest in Caterpillar's history, exceeding a 205-day strike in 1982 and 1983.

— **James B. Parks**

Court: IBT rules Holly Farms roost

Tyson Foods, in its attempt to pluck wages from the pockets of its Holly Farms workers, has laid an egg.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 4th Circuit ordered the giant poultry processor to bargain with Teamsters locals in North Carolina, Texas and Virginia. The company must also reinstate with back pay 47 long-haul drivers and provide back pay and benefits to 51 other long-distance drivers and 250 local drivers and yardmen.

Tyson bought Holly Farms in July 1989, four months after a representation election, and lowered pay and working conditions to the level of other Tyson workers. At the time of the sale, the Teamsters were organizing at two Holly Farm facilities.

The National Labor Relations Board found that Tyson engaged in numerous instances of unfair labor practices, including threats of firing drivers in the event of union success. After the organizing victory, the company worked to secure the arrest of workers who handed out union literature.

Judge Frances Murnaghan said Tyson as the successor to Holly Farms acquired the duty to bargain with the existing union at the time of the stock transfer. She ruled that imposing Tyson terms of employment on the Holly Farms workers represented an unlawful refusal to bargain.

At the IBT's request, the AFL-CIO has maintained Tyson Foods on its boycott list since 1989.

ECONOMY

Minimum wage helps middle, lower earners

By David Kameras

President Clinton's proposal to boost the minimum wage by 90 cents over two years primarily would benefit full-time, adult female workers in low-income and middle-class families, a new study by the Economic Policy Institute reveals.

The study thus refutes a major argument of critics of the minimum wage that it would help rich teenagers at the expense of low-wage workers.

Only 11.7 percent of the beneficiaries would be teenagers in high-income families, the EPI found in "Who Wins with a Higher Minimum Wage." The overwhelming majority — 71 percent — would go to working families with below-average incomes.

Additionally, 57.9 percent of minimum-wage earners are women, and those working more than 20 hours a week are disproportionately African-American (15 percent) and Hispanic (13.8 percent). Thirty-eight percent are the sole earners for their families and, on average, they contribute half of their family earnings, EPI found.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that 4.1 million, or 6.2 percent of all hourly workers, earn at or below the minimum wage. In the South, that figure is at 8 percent.

The EPI report is among several recent studies that refute the claim that a modest increase in the minimum wage would result in significant job loss among low-wage earners. On the contrary, EPI concludes, it would help those families who need it most.

One such family is that of Antonio Yanez, a $4.75-an-hour Clothing and Textile Worker employed for more than five years by Fojtasek Co., a building material manufacturer in Irving, Texas. Fojtasek's congressman, House Majority Leader Richard K. Armey, has called for elimination of the minimum wage.

"I am proud of the work I do and the products I make, but I'm not proud of the wages I'm paid and the way I'm treated," Yanez told a Capitol Hill forum on the minimum wage conducted by Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.). "(On the wages I make), there is no way I could survive. That's why I've taken a night job as a janitor, and that's why I can only spend 45 minutes every day with my wife and children."

"As many as half of today's children will face an adult worklife of perpetual poverty or near-poverty unless as a matter of public policy we begin to restore the worth of workers' wages.."

— W. Gary Sauter, UFCW vice president

Yanez described a record of daily injuries at the plants, whose operator has been slapped with a $250,000 federal penalty for health and safety hazards. Time off from work is also not allowed, and Yanez' ability to appear in Washington was due to a suspension.

'Why was I suspended? Because I spoke out against the race discrimination that occurs in the plants and helped file charges with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission," he said. "I only hope that the company does not fire me when they find out I spoke out in front of the United States Senate."

Keith Mahone, a contract custodial worker from Baltimore, supports a three-year-old daughter and a four-year-old niece, and has been unable to afford a home or car. But he will soon see a 43 percent increase in his paycheck, thanks to the new Living Wage Ordinance signed by Mayor Kurt Schmoke affecting city contract workers.

"That raise will make the difference between a life of poverty and one of hope for thousands of workers like me," said Mahone, an activist in the Solidarity Sponsoring Committee, an organization sponsored by AFSCME and area churches that was instrumental in gaining the living wage.

"One out of two new jobs created in this country are in minimum-wage industries such as retail, nursing home care, poultry processing and janitorial services," noted W. Gary Sauter, international vice president of the Food and Commercial Workers. "A large percentage of today's children — as many as half — will face an adult worklife of perpetual poverty or near-poverty unless as a matter of public policy we begin to restore the worth of workers' wages."

'We have to do something to make work pay, to make the minimum wage a livable wage," said Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich.

Raising the minimum wage would benefit many working middle-class families, because 32.8 percent of its recipients are in families with annual incomes between $22,000 and $48,937, the EPI study found.

"In spite of the growing economy of the 1990s, the squeeze on family incomes that began in the 1980s has been made even tighter," said Jared Bernstein, Lawrence Mishel and Edith Rasell, the authors of the report. "The only families able to achieve any income growth between 1989 and 1993 were the best-off five percent of families.

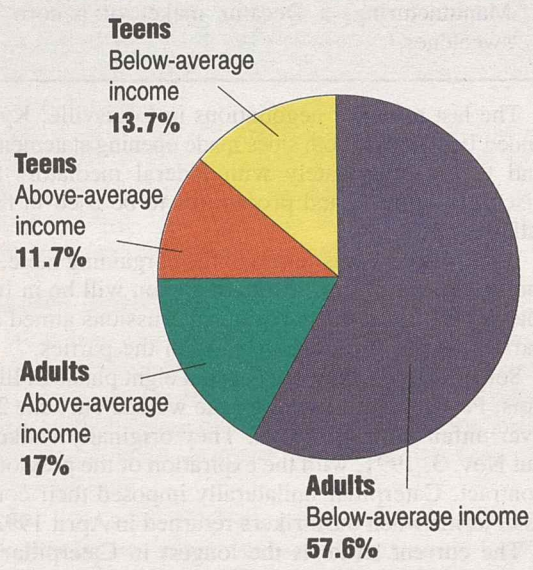
"Moreover, median family income fell four years in a row after 1989, the longest income decline in the post-war period," they said. "It is highly unlikely that middle-class incomes rose much or at all between 1993 and 1994."

"This persistent economic squeeze on families is the consequence of the continuing deterioration of real wages for the vast majority of workers and the dramatic growth in the wage gap between high-wage workers and those earning middle or low wages."

DATA

Minimum-wage earners

By income and age (1993)



Source: Economic Policy Institute

A new survey, debunking a major argument of opponents of raising the minimum wage, shows that only 11.7 percent of the beneficiaries would be teenagers in high-income families. The overwhelming majority — 71 percent — would go to working families with below-average incomes.

Unemployment Rate	
February	5.4 percent
From Jan. '95	-0.3 percent
Leading Indicators	
January	Unchanged
December '94	+0.2 percent

AFL-CIO NEWSGRAFIC

Unemployment nears five-year low

Job growth slows as troubling signs on horizon

Joblessness in America dropped back to the December level of 5.4 percent in February after showing a 0.3 percent increase in January. What appeared to be a dramatic turnaround drew raves from the White House.

"We have the lowest combined rates of unemployment and inflation in 25 years," said President Clinton. "The fundamentals of this economy overall are healthier than they have been in a generation."

But the trend appears to have a significant downside, AFL-CIO economists pointed out.

While payroll jobs increased 307,000 per month over the last year, that growth slowed to 241,000 during the last three months, suggesting that the bad effect is being felt from the continually rising interest rates, which have contributed to a 10 percent downturn in housing starts since November.

The official unemployment figure was 7.2 million. However, when added to 4.5 million people working part time for economic reasons and 1.7 million other available workers, the number of those suffering unemployment and underemployment reached 13.4 million.

Even with a rate at 5.4 percent, "there is still some way to go to reach the 5 percent recent low recorded in March of 1989, or the 4 percent full employment goal of the Humphrey-Hawkins law," said AFL-CIO economist Frank Parente.

Overall, the current economic recovery has been weak, with 7.2 million jobs added in the 47 months since the recession low. In contrast, the comparable periods following the 1975 and 1982 recessions added 12.6 million and 11.3 million jobs, respectively.

Manufacturing jobs rose 27,000 in February, mostly in the durable-goods sector. "This gain, however, was smaller than the change in any of the previous four months, each of which saw factory employment grow by more than 40,000," Bureau of Labor Statistics Commissioner Katherine Abraham told the congressional Joint Economic Committee.

Abraham also reported that the services industry accounted for 191,000 of February's payroll job gain. Business services created 73,000 jobs, about half in the "personnel supply services industry," which is dominated by low-wage, no-benefit jobs. The construction industry lost 32,000 jobs.

Average hourly earnings in February were flat, and a shorter workweek resulted in a 1.1 percent drop in average weekly earnings.

In 11 large states, unemployment declined in California (from 8.2 percent to 7.3 percent), Florida (from 5.8 percent to 4.5 percent), Massachusetts (from 6.0 percent to 5.4 percent), New Jersey (from 7.2 percent to 6.1 percent) and Pennsylvania (from 5.9 percent to 5.6 percent). Unemployment remained steady in Illinois (5.3 percent) and Ohio (4.0 percent) and rose in Michigan (from 5.5 percent to 5.6 percent), New York (from 6.0 percent to 6.1 percent) and North Carolina (from 3.8 percent to 4.6 percent).

Despite the relatively low unemployment rate, sizable layoffs are continuing at major companies. Some 31,000 jobs were eliminated in February by only 74 companies, including Boeing Co., Northrop Grumman Corp., GE Aircraft, Lockheed Corp. and Eastman Kodak.

The February jobless rate for teens actually went up from 16.7 percent in January to 17.6 percent, Parente noted. The February rate for women fell slightly to 4.8 percent. African-American joblessness also fell slightly to 10.1 percent, and the Hispanic rate dropped from 10.2 percent to 8.9 percent.

Meanwhile, Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich chided Republicans on a House labor subcommittee for acting "in the middle of the night, without any advance warning," to eliminate summer jobs during the next two years for 1.2 million young people.

"These Republicans say they're for the work ethic, but then make it tougher for kids to work," Reich said. "They say they're for family values, but then they kill jobs that families value. They look like Forrest Gump but act like Freddy Kreuger."

— David Kameras

UNION NEWS

GM 'stocks' pension plan

The Labor Department is waiving federal law to allow General Motors Corp. to contribute $6.3 billion worth of stock in lieu of cash to its underfunded pension plan.

To protect the interests of workers and retirees, the stock will be supplemented by $4 billion in cash and a number of conditions have been attached to the agreement. GM hopes to have its U.S. pension funds fully funded by the end of 1996.

UAW President Owen Bieber and Vice President Stephen P. Yokich called the action "good news for GM's UAW-represented active and retired workers and good news for the economy."

AFGE wins $80 million

The Government Employees won a record $80 million settlement from the Immigration and Naturalization Service, which violated the Fair Labor Standards Act by denying overtime to 1,500 criminal investigators over the past 10 years.

INS improperly classified the investigators as exempt from the law, according to the union. The INS claimed the workers were performing managerial and administrative duties.

The settlement, which will come out of the present INS budget, will pay $30 million this year and $10 million every year for the next five years. Senior agents will receive between $75,000 and $85,000 in back pay.

Rail talks reach impasse

The United Transportation Union and the Transportation Communications Union have called on the National Mediation Board to intervene in stalled talks with the National Carriers' Conference Committee, which represents eight rail carriers. Affected by the bargaining are 28,000 TCU clerical members and 40,000 UTU engineers, conductors, brakemen and yard workers.

"Despite record profits and bloated coffers, the rail industry has adopted the same hard-line attitude in this round of talks as the industry did at the start of the '90s, but this time TCU is not willing to have talks bogged down endlessly," TCU President Robert A. Scardelletti said. A UTU spokesman said talks so far have shown no progress.

PATCO rehiring lags

The AFL-CIO has called on President Clinton to step up efforts to rehire members of the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization, who were fired by President Reagan during a 1981 strike.

Although Clinton in 1993 lifted the ban on rehiring the strikers, the Federal Aviation Administration has hired only 27 of the 5,000 former PATCO members seeking work while recruiting less-qualified trainees, AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland stated in a letter to Clinton.

"Both fairness and common sense dictate that they should be allowed to compete on a level playing field for all FAA job openings for which they are qualified," he said.

Unions sue over reflagging

The Marine Engineers and the Masters, Mates and Pilots, a division of the Longshoremen, have joined three other maritime unions in suing to reverse a decision by the Maritime Administration to allow American President Lines to register six new ships under a foreign flag.

Although the agreement stipulates that the ships will become available to the government during a national emergency, the agency's action will seriously diminish the pool of skilled American personnel, noted MM&P President Timothy A. Brown.

Some 200 seafarers demonstrated in protest at the Oakland headquarters of the liner carrier, which received more than $62 million in federal subsidies last year.

Federal partnership councils bloom

Continued from Page 1

Meanwhile, members of AFGE Local 2855 at the Department of the Army's Military Ocean Terminal in Bayonne, N.J., have used their partnership agreement to increase the rate and percentage of incentive awards, negotiate a wellness program and participate in management discussions on contracting out services.

The wellness program allows an employee to take at least three hours per pay period to exercise. The union is also involved in decisions regarding personnel policy and practices.

Other recent partnership agreements by AFGE include:

- The VA Hospital in Bronx, N.Y., where members of Local 1168 are using self-directed work teams to make changes in the way the Medical Administrative Service operates.
- The VA Medical Center in New York City, where members of Local 2094 have developed an alternative dispute resolution team to handle disciplinary actions outside of the grievance procedure. They also helped to reorganize the department after the retirement of a supervisor, allowing upgrades for four people without increasing expenses.
- The National Guard Army/Air Technicians in New Jersey, where Local 371 members agreed to a complete reorganization of the National Guard that did not call for layoffs. They also gained the use of an agency vehicle for the local president and a union office for the first time.
- The VA Long Island National Cemetery in Farmingdale, N.Y., where members of Local 1919 reduced government costs significantly by eliminating contracting out of grass-cutting.

Now that the federal government has saved $64 billion through reinvention efforts, the focus should shift from the dollar amount to the amount of services that government has a mandate to provide, Sturdivant told reporters at a Feb. 21 press briefing.

When your grandmother calls the Social Security Administration she wants someone to answer the phone, Sturdivant noted. "None of us wants to eat infected meat or poultry or drink dirty water. And when disaster strikes, we count on FEMA to be there."

Partnership agreements between the government and worker organizations should help to improve customer service, he said.

RESOURCES

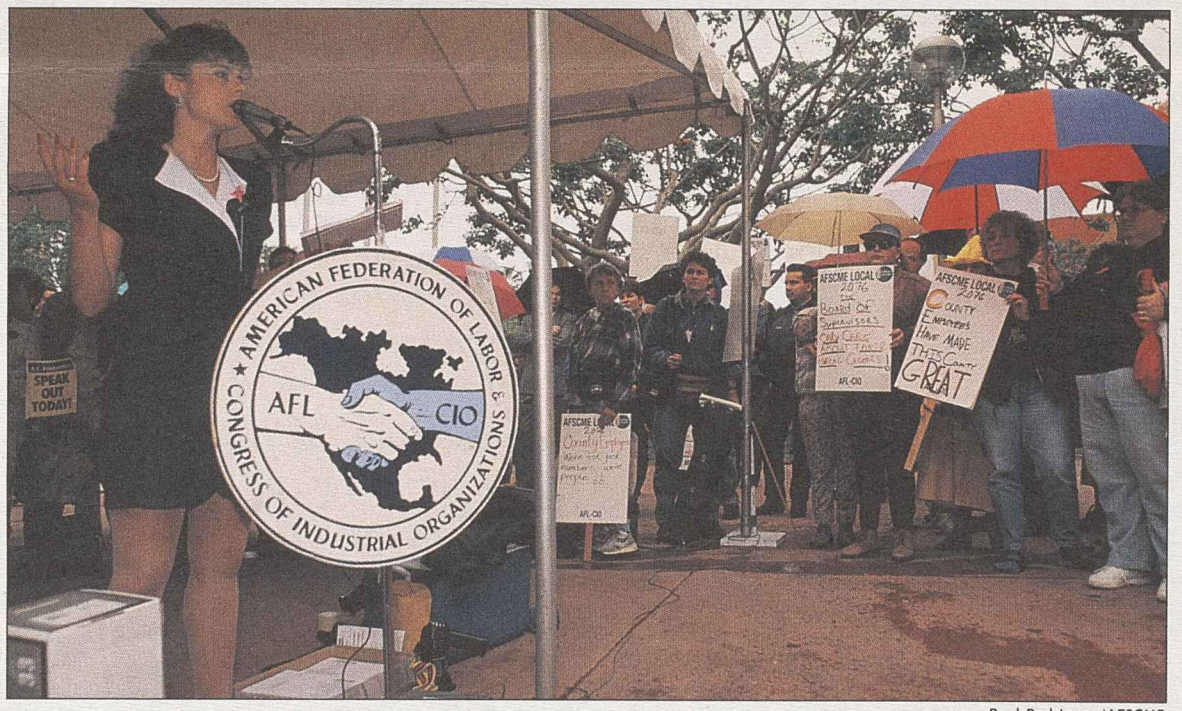
Women in Trade Unions, Organizing the Unorganized offers a collection of case studies on organizing female workers at the national or local level in both developing and industrialized countries. Copies are $26 plus $3 for shipping and handling. Contact the ILO Publications Center, 49 Sheridan Ave., Albany, N.Y. 12210.

Unions, Management and Quality is a new book by Edward Cohen-Rosenthal of Cornell University and Arthur Shostak of Drexel University. Copies are $35 each. Contact Irwin Professional Publishing, 1333 Burr Ridge Pkwy., Burr Ridge, Ill. 60521; or call 800/634-3966 ext. 1465.

Work-Related Musculoskeletal Disorders in Construction is a 170-page annotated bibliography of research worldwide on the issue. Copies are available from the Center to Protect Workers' Rights, 111 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001.

AUDIO

New York Labor Chorus Live '93, produced at a benefit concert June 19, 1993, includes songs of labor's struggles. Cassette tapes are $10 and compact disks are $15, plus $3 for postage and handling. Make checks or money orders payable to the Fund for Labor Education and mail to the NYC Labor Chorus, c/o Fund for Labor Education, 2109 Broadway, Suite 206, New York, N.Y. 10023.



Paul Rodriguez/AFSCME

Wendy Hannum, a member of AFSCME Local 2076, speaks to a March 10 rally against job cuts in Orange County, Calif., which lost millions of dollars due to bad investments. The AFL-CIO Strategic Approaches Committee has met to consider ways to assist the county employees.

NEWSMAKERS

Two unionists have been named to top state positions in Maryland. **John O'Connor,** president of the Washington, D.C., Building Trades, was named Maryland's Commissioner of Labor and Industry. **John Jeffries,** business manager for Machinists District 12 and a former member of the Maryland House of Delegates, was named assistant deputy commissioner of labor for the state.

Workers in strike-torn Decatur, Ill., helped to turn away a few city council members and elect a few of their own. The newest Decatur council members include Paperworkers Local 7837 President **David Watts,** among the workers locked out by Staley Manufacturing, and IBEW Local 146 Business Manager **Mike Corrigan.** Also running was Laborers' member **William Ducy.** In addition to the Staley lockout, Rubber Workers at Bridgestone/Firestone and UAW members at Caterpillar, a total of about 4,000 workers, are on strike in Decatur.

Lawrence T. Smedley has announced his retirement as executive director of the National Council of Senior Citizens, effective in November. Smedley, an expert on pensions and retirement income, was the associate director of the AFL-CIO Department of Social Security for many years before joining NCSC in 1988.

DEATHS

Harry F. Conn, a founder of Press Associates, Inc. (PAI) and the separate PR Newswire in Washington, died from a stroke in a Washington hospital. He was 75.

Conn began PAI, a news and photo service covering labor, along with Alexander H. Uhl in 1954. In 1966 he co-founded Press Relations Wire, which later became PR Newswire, transmitting news releases to the media. He sold both properties in the 1980s.

He is survived by his wife, two sons, a daughter, a brother and four grandchildren.

After one year, NAFTA disaster in the making

By David Kameras

A year ago, the newly implemented North American Free Trade Agreement was being hailed in some quarters as a landmark pact that would unite three economies into a single lean, mean, jobs-creating machine.

An ever-rising standard of living in Mexico was to help create consumer demand for U.S.-made products, boosting jobs on both sides of the border, they said.

What a difference a year makes.

Today, the Mexican economy is a disaster. Its currency has lost half its value and workers' wages have been capped at far below the resulting inflation rate. Since Jan. 1, 250,000 Mexican jobs have been lost, and economists predict an additional 750,000 will disappear this year.

Added to that is political instability, as reflected in an ongoing regional civil war and the flight to the United States of former President Carlos Salinas, who had been celebrated in his country for signing NAFTA. Charges of high-level corruption leveled at his government now is scaring away foreign investors.

In the United States, a net loss of up to 10,000 jobs may have been lost between January and September, according to a new AFL-CIO report assessing NAFTA's impact in its first year. That figure will be substantially increased by the $448 million trade deficit racked up in the fourth quarter.

As of Jan. 3, the Labor Department had received 321 petitions for NAFTA Transitional Adjustment Assistance for 34,799 workers. Many more workers affected by NAFTA may have opted for regular TAA because of less restrictive guidelines.

The same currency dilemma that makes U.S.-made goods prohibitively expensive in Mexico makes Mexican goods dirt cheap here. Therefore, 1995 promises to be marked by a substantial trade deficit with Mexico.

"The outlook for 1995 suggests major job loss in the United States," said Mark Anderson, director of the AFL-CIO Task Force on Trade. "A key element in Mexico's austerity plan is to drastically reduce imports and boost exports. This will come directly at the expense of U.S. workers.

"Further layoffs and plant closures are a certainty, as U.S.-based companies transfer work to Mexico to take advantage of bargain-basement wage rates. The small trade surplus that the United States currently has with Mexico soon will be a relic of the past," he said.

The Mexican government has responded to its economic catastrophe by imposing a 35 percent increase in gasoline prices and a 20 percent rise in electricity costs, with further increases throughout the year. The value-added tax applied at each stage of production will rise from 10 percent to 15 percent. Inflation in 1995 is now projected to reach 42 percent.

Meanwhile, Mexico's workers are expected to shoulder the burden of economic recovery, with the minimum wage scheduled to increase a mere 10 percent on April 1.

"The Mexican government would have us believe that this is all a mere hiccup, but it's not," said AFL-CIO economist Greg Woodhead. "Their economy is suffering from fundamental problems that will take years to resolve."

Although U.S. export of goods to Mexico rose 22 percent in 1994, imports from Mexico jumped by an unprecedented 24 percent. The overall trade surplus in goods shrank to $1.3 billion, or 19 percent. In 1993 the figure was $1.7 billion, and in 1992, $5.4 billion.

High-value-added goods, the kind associated with high-paying jobs, were supposed to sell big south of the border. Instead, imports of electronics, computer products and telecommunications equipment outpaced exports two to one.

According to the congressional Joint Economic Committee, a significant portion of the growth in exports has occurred with transshipments, foreign products that are imported into the United States and then re-exported to Mexico. Actual net exports to Mexico declined by about $500 million over the first nine months of NAFTA.

The drop in real wages in Mexico will contribute to a potential 50 percent drop in U.S. exports there, with a severe impact on employment.

Already, a strike at a Mexican RCA plant has caused a three-day shut-down at the company's Bloomington, Ind., plant, and thousands of U.S. workers elsewhere also have been affected by strikes prompted by the peso devaluation.

Strikebreaker battle far from over

Continued from Page 1

who make war on their employees,'' he said. ''Employers are rewarded with higher productivity and efficiency when they treat their workers with respect.

''The President's action was a move in the right direction and we stand ready to fight every one of the initiatives to overturn it,'' he added.

The order bans the use of permanent replacements by federal contractors on projects above $100,000, affecting only the worst element of the employer community, the AFL-CIO pointed out. The vast majority of unionized companies with federal contracts, about 99 percent, reach collective bargaining agreements without a strike.

The executive order ''will not only protect the jobs of U.S. workers who exercise their legal right to strike, but also will protect taxpayers from the shoddy workmanship and unpredictable delivery of scab-made products,'' Electronic Workers President William H. Bywater said.

Teamsters President Ron Carey praised the order as a ''bold action'' that means ''American families will no longer be giving their tax dollars to companies that fire people for using their right to strike.''

In the debate over the amendment, Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.), who led the filibuster, said the quarrel is a continuation of the earlier arguments over the legislation prohibiting the hiring of permanent replacements for strikers. ''Only now, the shoe is on the other foot, and it is clearly pinching our Republican friends.''

In the previous Congress, the House passed the Workplace Fairness Act banning the use of permanent replacements for strikers. Although a majority of the Senate supported the bill, backers were unable to gain the votes needed to break a Republican filibuster.

Kirkland pointed out that the same members of Congress who now complain about the Clinton executive order upsetting the ''delicate balance'' of labor-management relations are the ones who are advocating the so-called TEAM Act, a bill that would create company unions and heavily tilt the balance toward employers, he said.

Indeed, Kassebaum, who chairs the Labor and Human Resources Committee, introduced both the TEAM Act and the amendment to kill the executive order.

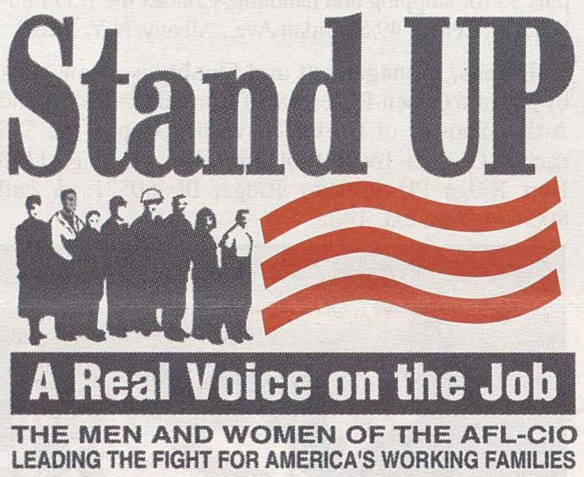
Blaming efforts to kill the executive order on anti-worker sentiments, Kennedy said the Kassebaum amendment was a means of determining ''how you can jam, how you can squeeze, how you can pressure down the economic rights of working men and women.''

In the end, Democrats were able to hold off this assault on worker rights with the help of the AFL-CIO and it's affiliates, which mobilized support for the order right up to the vote, said AFL-CIO Legislative Director Peggy Taylor.

Hundreds of state federations, central labor councils and local unions sent letters, FAXes and made calls to key senators whose votes were needed to prevent cloture. The federation had targeted several senators who had not committed to voting against cloture or who were thought to be wavering. The previous week, some 42 senators had voted against tabling the amendment and it was crucial to keep those votes, Taylor said.

''This victory would not have happened without the active and vocal efforts of our state federations, central labor councils and local unions and very intense lobbying by the White House and the Labor Department,'' Taylor said. ''The heat was on and members of the Senate were feeling it.''

But she warned that labor will have to keep up its guard. The day after their Senate counterparts fell two votes short of invoking cloture March 15, House Republicans passed a spending rescission bill that, among other things, denies funds for enforcing the order.



Materials for the AFL-CIO campaign to "Stand UP for a Real Voice on the Job" have been sent to the field for use in the fight to retain President Clinton's executive order against strikebreakers, as well as the legislative campaign against the so-called TEAM Act, which would legalize company unions. The materials also may be tailored for use in campaigns to counter anti-worker measures in state legislatures.

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INSIDE

UNION NEWS

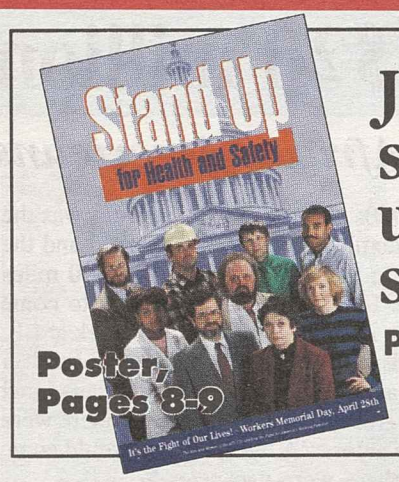
9 *Pirelli strike ended; Bridgestone in talks*



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Job safety under siege

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AFL-CIO NEWS

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Michael Sacco/IBEW

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland leads picketing outside the Caterpillar plant in Decatur, Ill.

Funds, spirits raised in Decatur

Labor leaders join strikers in show of strength

By Candice Johnson

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland and other top labor leaders delivered a personal message of solidarity and strength to Decatur, Ill., where some 4,000 working men and women and their families are fighting three union-busting employers.

Kirkland announced the establishment of a central strike relief fund, started with a $20,000 contribution from the federation and additional pledges by affiliates, to provide material support to the striking and locked-out workers.

Addressing an overflow crowd of nearly 1,000 people, Kirkland also paid tribute to the spirit of the Decatur workers, whom he said occupy a defining period in labor history. Their fight on the front line in Decatur would be a measure of the strength and valor of working men and women for years to come, he said.

Kirkland recalled another time, during the maritime strike of 1934, when industry thought it would ''try the union on for size.'' That was ''a time that tested the souls of all seafarers and dock workers,'' and for years following that fight, seafaring men would ask each other the question: ''Where were you in '34?''

It is the same struggle 60 years later in Decatur, he said. ''Generations yet unborn will recall what you're doing here and will ask: 'Where were you in '94 and '95?' ''

Kirkland recalled different circumstances in a previous trip to Decatur, during the mid-1980s, when he came as part of the founding of the state's first labor-management committee. The change in attitudes could be laid at the feet of multinational corporations that have no allegiance to work force, community or even nation, he said.

Kirkland, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Thomas R. Donahue and a number of AFL-CIO vice presidents joined workers on picket lines at plants owned by three of those multinational corporations — Bridgestone/Firestone, Caterpillar and A.E. Staley. Also accompanying the group was Rubber Workers President Kenneth Coss, who said his union continues to talk with Bridgestone.

Caterpillar also is talking with the UAW, but the company's attitude probably was best reflected by the

Continued on Page 12

Clinton moves quickly to curb scab contractors

Government reviewing strikebreaking firms

By James B. Parks

The administration has begun to move to implement President Clinton's executive order barring federal contracts with companies that use strikebreakers, focusing on firms that have adopted ''permanent replacement'' strategies against unions.

The Department of Labor's Office of the American Workplace (OAW) has asked the General Services Administration for information on federal contracts held by several companies that have used ''permanent'' scabs — including Bridgestone/Firestone, Diamond Walnut, Mosler Inc. and Cook Family Foods. These companies could be the first to be reviewed once the rules for implementing the order goes into effect.

The Labor Department's Charles L. Smith said he has asked GSA for the date and terms of any federal contracts of more than $100,000 with these companies.

The proposed rule was published March 29 in the Federal Register for comment. After 30 days, the department will review the comments and issue a final rule ''as expeditiously as possible,'' Smith said.

Under the proposed rule, the department would conduct an investigation or hold a hearing when it receives a complaint from any employee or employee representative. Complaints can be made against any federal contractor who attempts to permanently replace workers engaged in a lawful strike.

The head of the contracting agency could veto the department's decision to terminate the contract, according to the proposed rule.

Clinton and Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich publicly lambasted Bridgestone/Firestone for replacing more than half of some 4,000 Rubber Workers who have been on strike for eight months. The company, which has millions in federal contracts, joined business organizations in trying to overturn the order in the courts.

The suit, filed March 15 in federal court by the tire maker along with the Chamber of Commerce, National Association of Manufacturers, Labor Policy Association and American Trucking Association,

Continued on Page 5

Justice denied: Man who killed strikers gets off easy

By James B. Parks

The facts seemed to conclusively point to Larry Gray as a ruthless killer who ran down two striking Steelworkers on a picket line. But the facts didn't convince an Alabama jury.

Gray, then 24, was delivering steel to the scabs working in the National Standard plant in Columbiana, Ala., when he veered his tractor-trailer sharply off the road and into a group of pickets, killing Keith Cain and Walter Fleming. That was Sept. 7, 1993.

On March 25, a jury of six men and six women found the two men's deaths to be partly justified, reducing reckless murder charges against Gray to manslaughter.

They also found him not guilty of leaving the scene of an accident, even though police had chased him down and caught him miles from the plant.

The verdict defied the evidence, which emerged as the trial began March 12. Gray had bragged to company security guards that the strikers ''had better not get in my way,'' the jury was told.

Cain, 23, was taking a break from picketing, sitting in a lawn chair behind a plywood barricade. The truck roared through the barricade and killed him instantly. He had his back turned and never knew what hit him.

On the way to Cain, the truck killed Fleming, 58, who tried to jump clear of the onrushing truck but didn't make it.

County District Attorney Robby Owens told jurors that, with the help of a video, they could ''hear the truck wide open, throttle wide open, pedal to the metal'' as it ran over the strikers. That video, ironically made by security guards hired by National Standard to protect the scabs and monitor the pickets, graphically shows the 18-wheeler gathering speed and running off the road before it strikes Cain and Fleming.

Dr. Kenneth E. Warner, the forensic pathologist who performed the autopsies on the two men, said the impact of the tractor-trailer ''almost ripped off'' Fleming's leg and tore Cain's lung loose inside him.

Gray, now 26, is free on bond while awaiting sentencing on April 6. He faces two to 20 years in prison on each charge. If he had been convicted of reckless

Continued on Page 2

COURTS

Fine print: Go union

The U.S. Supreme Court made it easier for employers to revise or cancel health insurance and other benefits provided for their retired employees.

Ruling unanimously in Curtiss-Wright Corp. vs. Schoonejongena, the justices upheld standard benefit-plan wording that gives a company the right to amend the plan, including dropping it altogether.

The ruling should not affect retiree benefits negotiated as part of union contracts, however, because most of those agreements have clauses requiring management to consult with the union before changing benefits, said Richard Grant of the AFL-CIO Employee Benefits Department.

The case began when Curtiss-Wright Corp. canceled health benefits to retired non-union employees of a Wood-Ridge, N.J., plant it closed in 1983, saying it had reserved the right to amend the plan at any time. Two federal courts ruled that the plan language did not meet requirements of federal law and ordered the company to pay $2.7 million in back health care benefits, but the Supreme Court disagreed.

Workers' comp appeal barred

In a defeat for maritime workers, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the federal workers' compensation agency cannot file an appeal on behalf of injured dock workers.

The court ruled unanimously that the Labor Department's Office of Workers' Compensation Programs may not ask a federal court to overturn a decision by another arm of the department, the Benefits Review Board.

The board had denied full disability payments to a former Newport News Shipbuilding employee. Although the employee did not appeal the decision, the workers' compensation office did.

Justice Antonin Scalia, writing for the court, said the employee could appeal under the Longshore and Harbor Workers Compensation Act, but the agency should adopt a neutral position between employer and employee.

Carpal tunnel claim denied

A federal judge has denied a Toyota employee's disability claim based on carpal tunnel syndrome. Judge Karl S. Forester in Lexington, Ky., ruled that Pamela McKay is not impaired or substantially limited in a major life activity under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

McKay started working in the body weld division at Toyota's non-union Georgetown, Ky., plant in 1992. Within weeks she experienced pain and swelling, numbness and tingling in her hands, forearms and wrists. An orthopedic surgeon diagnosed carpal tunnel syndrome. The treatment included medication, splints and restrictions on the amount of weight she could lift.

The company repeatedly denied her request for light- or medium-duty assignments. Toyota claimed it accommodated her special needs by granting her medical leave of absence and modifying her job. But in June 1993, she was fired for excessive absences.

"Merely because she can no longer perform repetitive factory work does not render her significantly limited under the ADA," Forester said.

J.P. Stevens bias costs $20 million

ACTWU wins settlement for 3,000 African-Americans

By Muriel H. Cooper

Nearly 3,000 African-American employees of the former J.P. Stevens textile company won a $20 million settlement for widespread discrimination practiced at its nine plants.

The case was championed by the Clothing and Textile Workers, which began an historic organizing drive at J.P. Stevens in Roanoke Rapids, N.C., during the 1970s that became the basis for the movie "Norma Rae." The suit accused the company of denying employment and job advancement to minority employees.

Atlanta-based Westpoint Stevens, which purchased J.P. Stevens in 1987, agreed to settle the case. Among the 2,900 workers named in the case, nearly 800 plaintiffs, mostly ACTWU members, still work at the plants.

"At a time when the Republicans seek to dismantle protections that bring about equality in the workplace, this settlement serves as a reminder of why workers need unions," said ACTWU President Jack Sheinkman.

"When I first came here in 1965, it was like a slave/boss relationship," recalled Bennett Taylor, who has worked in the plant for 30 years. "We are human beings and want to be treated as such. Instead we weren't treated with respect.

"African-Americans were trapped in low-paying departments," he recalled. "They were quick to say, 'there is the door.' I would go to work feeling like something was riding my back."

During the 1960s and 1970s, J.P. Stevens was the second-largest textile company in the world and the main employer in the area, described as "90 miles from anywhere." Yet, jobs were not easy to come by, especially for African-Americans. To work at J.P. Stevens, a worker needed "to know someone."

"Sometimes a black would come to the personnel department and sit for hours just to be told there were no jobs," said Taylor. "A white person would come in and be told there were vacancies."

"This was a tight-knit town, but it needed to change," recalled Clyde Bush, ACTWU's district manager. "Once the union came, workers could bid on better jobs."

The empowerment that ACTWU brought to the plant workers spilled out of the factory. For the first time, many African-Americans realized that they could exert their legal rights and win.

Armed with their newly discovered organizing skills, workers began to reshape local politics, reform schools, protect the environment and improve race relations.

"I've seen changes since the union has been here," said Taylor. "The community is aware that the union is trying to make life better all the way around."

A generation has grown up during the time it took for the case to be settled. Taylor said he hopes the next generation learns that persistence pays, and that one has to be willing to get involved to make a difference.

Man who killed pickets gets off easy

Continued from Page 1

murder, he could have received 10 years to life on each charge.

Families and friends of Cain and Fleming, both members of USWA Local 15015, are left to wonder why they had to die simply for exercising their legal right to strike for a better life.

"Keith Cain and Walter Fleming will remain in our collective memory as innocent victims of the struggle for justice," said USWA Vice President Richard H. Davis.

"We must look beyond the grief and anger of their tragic deaths and dedicate ourselves in their names to make our country and communities places of peace," he said. "America's working people must have the right to strike without the use of replacement workers, which creates the circumstances that lead to tragedies such as this."

Fleming's widow, Mary, cried in relatives' arms after the verdict, saying "He'll have to answer to God."

Gail Cain, Keith's aunt, said the verdict was "an example of people being too soft on criminals."

USWA members around the country and Canada have contributed to a special fund to provide for the widows of both victims and Keith Cain's daughter, now 4 years old.

Gray's lawyer argued that he feared the pickets because drivers who crossed the picket line had been threatened with violence, a claim the union denies. Indeed the video clearly showed that Gray swerved his truck off the roadway and cut the corner where Cain, Fleming and the other picketers were gathered.

> *"He'll have to answer to God."*
>
> **— Mary Fleming**

"He had no thought of slowing down," said Arnold Shaw, one of the group who managed to jump out of the way. "When I realized he wasn't going to slow down for anything or anybody, I broke and ran," he testified.

After the deaths in 1993, Davis said he believed the deaths could have been prevented. "Our members asked Shelby County authorities back on June 14 to provide a sheriff's deputy on site, but they were told there was insufficient manpower," he said.

"The company did nothing to help circumstances when it hired goon guards and scabs, and then threatened to make the scabs permanent employees. This is a clear case of the company doing violence to its union workers," Davis said.

The 190 members of Local 15015 struck National Standard June 1, 1993, after the contract with the company expired. The members rejected company demands to cut wages and benefits by $7 an hour and require workers to pay an average $160 a month toward health insurance.

The company also wanted to establish 12-hour shifts, which would eliminate 50 jobs, and to contract out bargaining unit work at will, cutting another 22 jobs.

A year later, National Standard closed the plant.

AFL-CIO NEWS

Director of Information: Rex Hardesty

Editor: Michael Byrne

Assistant Editors: Candice Johnson, David Kameras, James B. Parks

Staff Writers: Muriel H. Cooper, Mike Hall, Colleen M. O'Neill, Sharolyn A. Rosier

Graphics/layout: Stan Hitt

AFL-CIO Headquarters: 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006
Telephone: (202) 637-5010
CompuServe: 76004,3601

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Bill Burke/Page One Photography

AFSCME President Gerald W. McEntee and Secretary-Treasurer William Lucy lead an AFSCME contingent among thousands who rallied on Capitol Hill against Republican plans to cut child nutrition, school lunch and day care programs. Several unions participated in the Sunday "lunch-in."

Constructive welfare reform urged

GOP seeks to gut 60 years of social progress

By Colleen M. O'Neill

The Republican-led House, envisioning a nation where the rich get richer and the poor are invisible, passed a bill to turn over the welfare system to the states.

The effort to dismantle social programs in place for 60 years came with heated debate and numerous warnings from Democrats about the bill's risks to impoverished Americans, particularly children. The AFL-CIO joined in voicing those concerns while appealing for constructive changes to the system.

"While the AFL-CIO agrees with the bipartisan view that the present welfare system must be reformed, we are strong in our position that reform must include a comprehensive job creation and work force development strategy," said Gerald M. Shea, AFL-CIO director of employee benefits.

Shea testified before the Senate Finance Committee March 20. The Senate is expected to reject the more radical House version of welfare reform, as it has done on most other planks of the GOP's reactionary "Contract with America."

> *"The central goal of welfare reform should be locating and creating unsubsidized private- and public-sector jobs so that welfare recipients can become self-sufficient."*
>
> **— Gerald M. Shea, AFL-CIO employee benefits director**

"The central goal of welfare reform should be locating and creating unsubsidized private- and public-sector jobs so that welfare recipients can become self-sufficient," Shea said. He pointed out that the AFL-CIO specifically opposes proposals to set lifetime or fixed time limits on assistance, as well as efforts to return the food stamp program to a capped entitlement with a fixed allocation, give block grants with frozen funds and restrict benefits to immigrants legally in the United States.

The federation's program, by contrast, would include a higher minimum wage, anti-displacement protections, creation of temporary subsidized work positions, subsidized child care and medical care, and continued flexible federal aid to states as a way to continue providing for the country's poorer residents while reforming the welfare system.

Particularly troublesome, Shea said, is the plan for block grants with a fixed dollar amount.

"If Aid for Families with Dependent Children becomes a block grant, recessions will be deeper, last longer and do more long-lasting damage to their victims," he told senators. "Providing increased federal aid to states during recessions is an efficient, effective and appropriate role for the federal government."

Despite the AFL-CIO's warnings, the House-passed measure cuts off aid after five years, denies assistance for most legal immigrants and for teen mothers and allows states to design their own welfare programs. School breakfast and lunch programs are combined and rolled into a block grant to states, as are family nutrition programs like the Women, Infants and Children supplemental feeding program.

The plan would cut available money by $69 billion over the next five years.

Even though the final measure retained food stamps as a federal entitlement program, the combined cuts likely will mean a sharp increase in hunger and malnutrition, the AFL-CIO said.

The risks to Americans are plainly seen in data recently released by the Department of Labor. According to "Working and Poor — An American Paradox," 7.4 percent of working Americans were poor in 1993, nearly 11 percent of all working families with children received food stamps during that year, and 16.7 percent received free or reduced-price lunches for their children.

Two recent studies laid out the likely consequences of the GOP's sharp swords. The Center for Budget and Policy Priorities in Washington and the Michigan League for Human Services warned of the impact of the draconian bill.

"During a recession, a state could be forced to choose between meeting the additional needs entirely with state funds, cutting benefits to poor families across the board or denying aid to newly poor families in which the parents recently became unemployed," the center said.

That is echoed by the Michigan study, partially funded by the UAW and the state AFL-CIO, which looks at GOP Gov. John Engler's cut of the state's general assistance and job training programs. Engler theorized that no real harm would be done because the affected individuals would find jobs, their families would house them and private agencies could help smooth the bumpy transition.

However, one year later, nearly 70,000 were unemployed, private agencies were overwhelmed and one-fourth of those affected had become homeless.

Workers planning to 'Stand UP' with recess fight

LAC meetings targeting anti-worker GOP agenda

By Mike Hall

Union members across the country are poised to take labor's concerns to representatives and senators in a series of meetings, rallies and other events during the congressional recess, which is set to begin April 7.

With the House taking three weeks off and the Senate two weeks, more than 100 of the AFL-CIO's Legislative Action Committees (LACs) have requested special meetings with members of Congress, including more than three dozen Republicans.

These meetings and other events are designed to tell members of Congress, especially Republicans and Democrats who have backed some of their anti-worker initiatives, that working families remain adamantly opposed to the GOP's agenda — not just what has passed in the first 100 days, but any proposal that would harm workers and their families, said AFL-CIO Legislative Director Peggy Taylor.

As part of the recess campaign, the AFL-CIO is buying print and TV ads in Washington and selected congressional districts to say it's time to "Stand UP" against this Congress.

Workers also are being encouraged to attend town meetings and other public events where members of Congress are scheduled to appear. The AFL-CIO advertising campaign highlights how the new GOP-controlled Congress has used its power to bludgeon laws and programs for working families, including:

- The attack on wages through efforts to repeal prevailing wage laws such as the Davis-Bacon and the Service Contract acts, adamant resistance to raising the minimum wage and the attempt to gut the Fair Labor Standards Act, which governs overtime and the 40-hour workweek.
- The assault on workplace safety, including House-passed legislation to use a moratorium to ban new and some existing workplace health and safety standards — making it nearly impossible to issue new workplace, public or environmental health and safety protections — and legislation aimed at hamstringing OSHA's inspection and enforcement role.
- The attack on worker rights through legislation to allow the establishment of "company" unions, and the attempt to overturn President Clinton's executive order barring the government from doing business with companies that use permanent replacement workers.
- The Republican roadblock on job creation by gutting job training funds, eliminating or severely reducing infrastructure construction work like highway and transit projects, and the unprecedented attack on government workers.

The LACs' grass-roots political activities will go hand-in-hand with labor's planned Workers Memorial Day events April 28 **(See story, Page 5).**

In other congressional developments:

DAVIS-BACON — Republicans on the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee March 29 approved legislation repealing the Davis-Bacon Act. But during an impassioned defense of the prevailing wage standard, Democrats vowed the bill will never pass the Senate.

Sens. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.), Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) and Paul Wellstone (D-Minn.) all promised a filibuster if and when the bill gets to the floor. The act requires contractors on federal and federally funded construction and repair projects to pay the locally prevailing wage.

SAFETY — In place of a House-passed regulatory moratorium, the Senate March 29 passed a substitute measure that would allow Congress a 45-day period to review any new federal regulation. Even under the Senate measure, however, workplace health and safety regulations would be hampered and could easily be attacked or halted. The House moratorium would have banned all new federal workplace, public, and environmental health and safety measures through the end of the year. It was also retroactive to last November's election. The two bills now go to a House/Senate conference.



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

Hillary Rodham Clinton warns the Machinists legislative conference that Republicans in Congress intend to slash the social safety net. At left is IAM President George Kourpias.

IAM pledges to hold the line

By David Kameras

The Republican legislative agenda is "a financial arrangement that protects the interests of the very wealthy and the very powerful at the expense of the middle class, poor and the needy," Hillary Rodham Clinton told the Machinists legislative conference.

The strategy of the new majority party in Congress "is based on the manipulation of people's feelings and their perspectives by folks who want to divide everybody below a certain level in society," she said.

That assessment was echoed by a number of union and government leaders who addressed the three-day meeting in Washington, which included afternoons of lobbying with home-town legislators.

"Make no mistake about it," IAM President George J. Kourpias warned. "The Republican Party sees its so-called Contract with America as a road map for returning America to the days of the robber barons, of sweat shops, child labor and — best of all — a union-free environment."

"They talk about 'empowerment' and 'opportunity,'" said AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland. "But you and I know that the only power they want is that which is already held by the privileged elements of our society."

"If this new majority in Congress gets its way, you can say good-bye to the programs that have helped working Americans create a better and more decent society out of a market jungle that once claimed our land," Kirkland said.

Clinton pointed to efforts to pass a $17 billion rescissions bill as "a clear attempt to slash the social safety net," taking advantage of voters who "are bitter, unhappy, angry and frankly just so put out about what's going in their own lives, in their own personal situations, that they just say, 'fine, do it to them.' Who them is, them is somebody else."

She said issues like gun control are distorted and used to divert attention from the concerns that affect daily lives. "Today, everyone seems to be blaming the government for what ails our society," even though government has provided occupational safety and health laws, a minimum wage and rules for collective bargaining, she said.

The first lady urged the IAM activists to convey their message to union members, some of whom "get their information from radio talk-show hosts who get their orders every day from the Republican National Committee. The issues will be clear enough for people to understand. People will say, 'Well, I've still got my gun, but they just cut my health benefits.'"

Also addressing the conference was Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich, who pointed to President Clinton's executive order banning federal contracts with employers who permanently replace strikers and said, "having to get by with products made by the equivalent of minor league players doesn't make sense."

House Minority Whip David E. Bonior (D-Mich.) noted that House Republicans had introduced a bill to kill Clinton's executive order less than 12 hours after it was signed, "and within 24 hours they were on the Senate floor. . . . I don't remember any of them speaking out when Bridgestone/Firestone replaced 3,200 workers in January."

House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.) warned that Republicans are seeking to slash the school lunch program to fund a tax cut, of which 51 percent would go to families earning $100,000 or more — a process he called "Robin Hood in reverse."

Other speakers included Commerce Secretary Ron Brown; Reps. Lincoln Diaz-Balart (R-Fla.), John Lewis (D-Ga.), Martin Frost (D-Texas), Neil Abercrombie (D-Hawaii), Bernard Sanders (I-Vt.), Cynthia McKinney (D-Ga.), Sam Gejdenson (D-Conn.), James A. Traficant (D-Ohio), Marcy Kaptur (D-Ohio) and Joseph P. Kennedy II (D-Mass.); Sens. Barbara A. Mikulski (D-Md.) and Christopher J. Dodd (D-Conn.); and AFL-CIO Legislative Director Peggy Taylor.

AFSCME says it will 'go to war' for public workers

More than 300 delegates to the AFSCME legislative conference, meeting under the banner, "Public Service: A Real Contract with America," vowed to fight efforts to cut public services and the jobs that go with them.

AFSCME President Gerald W. McEntee said the union would "send a message to governors that American government is not just for the rich — it's for everyone. This time around we have to launch a major educational initiative that brings together women's groups, civil rights groups, senior groups, and any other group that can help tell the people of America what is really at stake."

After hearing a litany of problems with the current Congress, delegates marched up the Hill to express those concerns to their own representatives. The workers lobbied on such issues as welfare reform, health care, job training and worker safety and health, expressing particular concern with the assault on workers contained in the Republicans' so-called "Contract with America."

"AFSCME is at war against the Republicans who have taken over Congress — and particularly those in the House who are marching to the demagoguery of (Speaker) Newt Gingrich," McEntee said.

To AFSCME, the new Congress has "made it plain that, one way or another, they are out to get us. We are the enemy, and they want to see AFSCME in the grave," McEntee said.

Sen. Christopher Dodd (D-Conn.), chairman of the Democratic National Committee, reminded workers of the power they wield if they mobilize for action. The Republican attacks on workers in general and women in particular must be fought by all, he said.

Jeff Faux, president of the Economic Policy Institute, told the delegates they should not let their legislative representatives be deceived by public opinion surveys.

"People are looking for change and it's up to each of you to tell them what kind of change you want, not the polls."

Other speakers included House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.); Harold Ickes, White House deputy chief of staff; Rep. Chaka Fattah (D-Pa.); Rep. Barney Frank (D-Mass.); Celinda Lake of Lake Research; and Marian Wright Edelman, president of the Children's Defense Fund.

JOB SAFETY

OSHA cases stand

The U.S. Supreme Court has let stand two decisions involving OSHA enforcement actions.

In the first, the court declined to review a ruling by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit that OSHA's inspection of a bridge and highway construction project did not violate a steel company's Fourth Amendment rights, because the site was an open area.

The court also let stand a decision by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit that allowed a subpoena against a chemical company for welding records, ruling against the company's claim of a violation of Fourth Amendment rights.

The rulings follow a District of Columbia appeals court decision that affirmed OSHA's process for random selection of worksites for inspection, also a Fourth Amendment case.

OSHA penalties reconsidered

OSHA is considering scaling back its fines for willful and serious violations to ease the impact on small businesses, agency officials have said.

In a draft proposal, the agency said it would cut its proposed minimum penalty for willful violations for employers with 50 or fewer workers from $25,000 to $5,000. In addition, OSHA is drafting changes for penalties imposed for alleged serious violations to take into account good-faith measures, officials said.

Meanwhile, OSHA Administrator Joseph A. Dear has decided to require states administering their own safety and health plans to adhere only to the $5,000 minimum penalty for willful violations for all-sized employers, leaving it to the states whether to impose the $25,000 fine.

Willful violations are those committed with intentional disregard of statutes; serious violations carry a substantial probability of death or serious physical harm.

Fall rule delayed

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration's rule for worker protection against falls in steel erection has been delayed until Aug. 6. The old provisions remain in effect until then.

Also delayed is the effective date of amendments to its construction standards on personal protective and lifesaving equipment.

OSHA said it intends to reopen the rulemaking period on the construction fall protection rule and will invite comment regarding the appropriate fall protection measures for employees in non-building steel erection activities; the appropriateness of the criteria for fall protection systems; and the training requirements as they pertain to all steel erection activities.

N.C. authority returned

OSHA has announced the end of its joint jurisdiction with North Carolina officials over the state's safety and health agency.

OSHA Administrator Joseph A. Dear said modifications in laws coupled with increased state funding and staffing had given the state the necessary resources to provide effective worker protection.

Federal job safety officials had assumed joint enforcement in North Carolina in the wake of the Sept. 3, 1991, fire at a chicken-processing plant in Hamlet, N.C., in which 25 workers were killed.

Ergonomics rule under threat of 'DeLay'

By Colleen M. O'Neill

In the fencing match over the future of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Congress has aimed its rapier at agency funding and the ergonomics rule just beginning to be developed.

The Senate, with an eye toward restricting the agency's work on such new standards as ergonomics, on March 29 took up the House-passed bill that would cut $19.5 million from OSHA for the current year.

OSHA, meanwhile, released a draft proposed rule on ergonomics to all involved parties, including the AFL-CIO and several affiliated unions. The draft outlined a rule that would cover 2.6 million employers and 21 million workers — down from an initial 6.1 million employers and 96 million workers, and scaled back also in scope and size from earlier measures.

Just the fact the agency continues to work on new rules was reason enough for one House member to ask for an additional $3.5 million in cuts.

The amendment by the aptly named Rep. Tom DeLay (R-Texas) was passed and was part of the package considered by the Senate. He labeled his amendment a warning to OSHA to heed the will of Congress.

"The best way to get a bureaucrat's attention is to cut their central office. That is what this amendment does," he said during debate on his measure March 15. "It goes right to the heart of the bureaucracy and cuts $3.5 million right out of the heart of OSHA."

"Clearly, DeLay and his allies have focused in on OSHA and this rule as one they would like to stop," said Peg Seminario, director of the AFL-CIO Department of Occupational Safety and Health. "If they're successful, and OSHA can't address this rule, it can't address any safety and health reforms in the workplace."

Efforts by the Republican-controlled Congress to gut workplace health and safety have sharpened the focus for the annual Workers Memorial Day as well, Seminario pointed out.

Trade unionists in districts with key members of House and Senate appropriations and labor committees are working on events to mark the day, April 28, while plans continue at workplaces and in communities for such events as rallies, dinners, memorial services, petition drives and even a road race.

In addition, international unions are at work on the campaign to stand up for workplace health and safety, lobbying state and federal lawmakers to keep workplace protections strong.

The observance will help spotlight the ergonomics fight, which is being carried out on several levels — first over the merits of the urgently needed ergonomics standard and, on a larger scale, as a battle over the future of the federal safety and health agency.

The statistics clearly show how workers would benefit immediately from the ergonomics rule, already nearly five years in the making:

- The incidence of repetitive stress injuries has climbed 770 percent in the past decade.
- RSI is the fastest-growing category of illness and injury in the Bureau of Labor Statistics annual report.
- RSIs account for more than 65 percent of all illnesses reported in 1993.
- These strain and sprain injuries occur in all types of work situations — assembly lines, meat-packing plants, offices, construction sites and medical settings, for example.

Any worker who performs the same motions hundreds of times a day, or heavy lifting, stretching or carrying heavy loads frequently throughout the work day, is at risk.

Angelos cheered for striking out scab baseball

IUD conference focuses on economic tribulations

By James B. Parks

A tearful Peter Angelos vowed that his Baltimore Orioles would never use scab baseball players and that he would push for a negotiated settlement to the baseball strike.

Angelos, the son of a steelworker who emigrated from Greece, accepted the Lewis-Murray-Reuther Award at the AFL-CIO Industrial Union Department's annual legislative conference. The millionaire labor lawyer said his refusal to use scab players was "normal for any sensible, reasonable American."

His fellow owners would benefit most by negotiating a settlement to the strike rather than carrying out their threat to lock out the players, he said. He expressed optimism that both sides were talking over the owners' latest proposal.

Angelos praised organized labor for being the backbone of the American economy. "Many in business understand that we are in danger of becoming a second-rate industrial power," he said, "and only through organized labor can the United States regain its position as an economic colossus."

He decried the drop in Americans' standard of living in the global economy. "This country never really advanced until organized labor lifted up the country literally by its bootstraps and gave American men and women opportunity and dignity.

"The 'global economy' — like the use of replacement workers and replacement players — means one thing: absolute reduction in the American standard of living. We can't have any more of that."

Middle-class families cannot expect any help from the Republican Congress, AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland told the conference. "But you can be sure (they) will do everything they can to aid and abet corporate America's flight from our shores," he said.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Baltimore Orioles owner Peter Angelos presents team caps to Jason Pisette and Rodney Dwyer, whose fathers belong to Chemical Workers Local 952 in Nashua, N.H. Looking on are ICWU President Frank D. Martino, IUD President Elmer Chatak and Ladies' Garment Workers President Jay Mazur.

"We face a major challenge — the challenge of standing up for this country and defending everything our movement has ever done to build a decent society for working people and their families."

Heeding IUD President Elmer Chatak's call to "educate lawmakers about the serious needs of our nation's working men and women," the delegates spent the entire afternoon of the first day of the conference lobbying members of Congress.

Ladies' Garment Workers President Jay Mazur, IUD's legislative chairman, told the delegates that only "a strong, independent labor movement could guarantee the rights of working people. The best defense is a good offense."

Organized labor must "articulate a policy of economic justice, take it to our people and hope to regain those who have abandoned hope."

Other speakers included AFL-CIO Vice Presidents Lenore Miller of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union; George Becker of the Steelworkers; Richard L. Trumka of the Mine Workers; Moe Biller of the Postal Workers; Morton Bahr of the Communications Workers; Owen Bieber of the UAW; Jack Sheinkman of the Clothing and Textile Workers; and William Bywater of the Electronic Workers.

President Frank Martino of the Chemical Workers and IUD Secretary-Treasurer Peter diCicco also addressed the conference, as did Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.), winner of the "Legislator of the Year" award. Other speakers included Sens. Russ Feingold (D-Wis.) and Patty Murray (D-Wash.); and Reps. Donald M. Payne (D-N.J.), George Miller (D-Calif.) and Barney Frank (D-Mass.).

Strikebreakers in danger of losing federal contracts

Continued from Page 1

seeks an injunction to stop the department from implementing the executive order.

About 5,000 URW members were on strike nationwide at Bridgestone/Firestone and Pirelli Armstrong in what has become the longest strike on record for the union, surpassing a 141-day strike in 1976.

The Pirelli workers returned to work March 13 and ratified a new contract March 27. All the strikers regained their jobs, except some 150 who retired.

Some 500 mostly Hispanic female members of the Teamsters have been on strike at Diamond Walnut in Stockton, Calif., since September 1991, when they walked out over company demands that they again give back wages and health benefits. The workers had made significant sacrifices six years earlier that brought the company back to profitability. They were replaced mostly by white males.

Members of the Firemen and Oilers went on strike in November 1993 against Cook Family Foods in Grayson, Ky., after the company refused to negotiate a first contract. The company, which is owned by agricultural giant ConAgra, replaced the 400 strikers.

Some 250 UAW members were locked out of Mosler Safe Co. in Hamilton, Ohio, on June 8, 1992, and have been permanently replaced. When the company was bought in a leveraged buyout, top management demanded 42 takeaways, the UAW said, including the right to hire and assign temporary workers. When the Mosler workers rejected the company demands, they were locked out.

The House Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee has scheduled a hearing April 5 on a bill by committee chairman Rep. William Goodling (R-Pa.) that would kill the executive order.

Senate Republicans recently dropped their latest effort to kill the order, which was to attach the ban to an appropriations rescissions bill. The House version of the bill includes language killing the order, but Senate Republicans appear reluctant to keep it when the bill goes to conference.

Earlier, Senate Republicans tried to attach the ban to a defense appropriations bill, but were unable to muster enough votes to break a Democratic filibuster that stopped it.

ORGANIZING

OPEIU wins big in Florida

More than 1,100 Dade County, Fla., professionals voted overwhelmingly for representation by the Office and Professional Employees.

The workers were frustrated because they were ''out of the loop,'' not included in meetings about layoffs, the budget, cutbacks or working conditions, said OPEIU Secretary-Treasurer Gilles Beauregard.

''They came to realize that as professionals, they needed a union with experience representing professional workers,'' he said. OPEIU has two other representation elections pending among supervisory professional employees in Dade and Broward counties in South Florida.

The new union members in Dade, who voted by an 11-1 margin for OPEIU, work in 40 different positions for the county, from police officers to social workers.

UFCW wins Beverly units

Two more nursing homes operated by Beverly Enterprises went union in Thomaston, Ga., as the Food and Commercial Workers won representation rights at the Providence Home, 43-24, and at the Clearview Nursing Home, 44-11.

Workers at Beverly, the nation's largest nursing home company in the country, also are being organized by the Service Employees. The chain is under sanctions from the National Labor Relations Board for its mistreatment of workers, and also is under fire for poor treatment of patients.

''The issues were human respect, short staff and unaffordable health insurance,'' said UFCW spokesperson Greg Denier. ''These workers make low wages and are expected to pay high-cost insurance.''

LIUNA adds 300 in Alabama

Laborers Local 1317 organized nearly 300 county employees in Jefferson County, Ala., after a six-week campaign.

''We knew we were not being treated fairly, so we decided that Local 1317 could help us with proper representation,'' said highway maintenance worker Austin Pruitt. Local 1317 has represented public employees in the area for more than 20 years.

The workers were subjected to favoritism, unfair work rules and extreme workloads, union organizers noted. The non-union employees also were aware that union co-workers were receiving better pay and benefits.

Workers choose UAW in rerun

Concerns about health and safety and benefits prompted production and maintenance workers at A-Mold in Mason, Ohio, to vote for UAW representation the second time around.

Workers were told after the no-union first vote that their concerns would be met — but nothing changed, and in December 1994 the workers voted 129 to 80 for the UAW. The workers manufacture car wheels for General Motors.

Pioneer votes Teamsters

More than 100 drivers at five locations of Pioneer Logistics Services, Inc., voted for Teamsters representation after a ''member-to-member'' campaign that also is being used by the IBT at Overnite Transportation Co.

IBT Local 299 Organizer Don Smith said the cumulative vote March 9 was 60-48, covering workers at locations in Flat Rock, Mich.; Statesville, N.C.; Monroe, Ohio; Gas City, Ind.; and Lexington, Ky.

Transport unit joins USWA

The 300-member Independent Transportation Workers Union joined the Steelworkers to take advantage of stronger services and resources available from the USWA.

The Pittsburgh-based ITWU represents Mayflower Co. workers and other smaller transportation firms in the Mon Valley and Pittsburgh area.

The USWA, which represents 15,000 transportation workers, is conducting an organizing drive among non-union taxi, school and access drivers in western Pennsylvania.



Montgomery (Ala.) Advertiser

James Armstrong leads marchers across the Edmund Pettis Bridge in Selma, Ala., to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the march that spawned the Voting Rights Act. Among the hundreds of trade unionists and civil rights activists marching the 54 miles between Selma and Montgomery were, from left, Rep. John Lewis (D-Ga.), who was brutally beaten on the bridge 30 years ago; Postal Workers Civil Rights Director Sidney Brooks; UAW Civil Rights Director Joe Davis; Rev. Joseph Lowery, president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference; Evelyn Lowery; and Coretta Scott King, widow of Martin Luther King, Jr., who led the 1965 march.

NLRB filings by labor validated

Unions say 'blocking charge' rule essential

By James B. Parks

A National Labor Relations Board survey validating union filings of unfair labor practice charges bolsters an NLRB policy that allows unions to use the filings to block representation and decertification elections.

AFL-CIO General Counsel Laurence Gold said the survey, which shows that nearly three-fourths of the filings blocking representation elections are valid, completely refutes allegations by employers ''that the present procedure results in the filing of frivolous charges for the purpose of interfering with the representation election process.''

''Were it not for the blocking charge policy, the board would be holding a substantial number of elections in circumstances where employee free choice is inhibited by unfair labor practices,'' Gold said.

Under the ''blocking charge'' rule, a union can block a representation election or a decertification vote by filing an unfair labor practice charge with the NLRB. The agency's longstanding approach has been that it will not conduct elections when misconduct has not yet been remedied.

Gold, in a letter to NLRB Chairman William B. Gould IV, urged the board to keep the blocking charge policy. Using the board's scarce resources to hold an election ''which is likely to have to be re-run is a waste'' of time, personnel and money, he said.

An internal NLRB memo showed that 71.9 percent of the charges brought under the rules had merit in cases where the election was not held. In decertification cases, the rate was 62.8 percent.

The issue sparked sharp debate last October when the NLRB proposed cutting back or eliminating the rule. During a public hearing, union representatives said a change in the rule would allow employers to violate the law with impunity before an election.

Citing the overwhelming advantage that management has in the election process, Service Employees General Counsel Jonathan Hiatt told the board that management complaints about the rule were akin to a diner who is served a gourmet meal, but then ''complains of the omission of an after-dinner mint.'' Changing the rule would allow employers to profit from wrongdoing, he said.

Employers, not workers, break the law during representation elections, Food and Commercial Workers General Counsel George Murphy said. If the employer had done nothing wrong, there would be no basis for a complaint. He compared the employers' charges to those of a child who kills his parents and pleads for mercy because he is an orphan.

IBT files new charges in Overnite votes

Employees at Overnite Transportation Co.'s Detroit facility voted 57-37 for representation by the Teamsters, as new charges against the company for threatening union supporters were filed with the National Labor Relations Board.

The fifth unfair labor practice complaint was filed against Overnite officials in Elmsford, N.Y. The company has resorted to a number of illegal tactics in fighting a nationwide organizing campaign at some 40 terminals involving about 9,000 workers.

Because of company intimidation, election results in Elmsford and in Toledo, Ohio, should be overturned, the IBT said. The union lost by one vote, 5-6, in Elmsford, and by three votes, 29-32, in Toledo.

Overnite also used strong-arm tactics with workers in Lexington, Ky., where the NLRB ordered that an election be postponed because of company threats and intimidation.

Some 40 separate violations of federal law have been issued against Overnite President Jim Douglas and Vice President Robert Edwards, charging that ''Overnite has been interfering with, restraining and coercing employees'' in violation of federal law, the union said.

The company's anti-union tactics have backfired in some places, including Detroit, where Overnite saturated the market with advertising to discourage a union vote.

Instead, the workers resented their expensive arm-twisting.

''Those radio ads just made everyone angry because they spent so much money that could have been used to help employees instead of attacking us,'' said Dave Haydu, a six-year Overnite employee.

Nearly 1,000 Overnite workers already have voted for the Teamsters in Chicago, Indianapolis, Kansas City, Mo., Sacramento, Calif., St. Paul, Minn., St. Louis, Milwaukee and Grand Rapids, Mich.

Overnite is the fourth largest less-than-truckload (LTL) carrier in the country.

Budget cutting, scapegoating anger workers

Public services are put at risk in U.S. cities

By Sharolyn Rosier

Public employees from Pennsylvania to California are fighting back against a variety of harmful local government initiatives, including layoffs and furloughs.

Transport Workers struck March 27 against Philadelphia's Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, with workers chanting "no contract, no work" after last-ditch negotiations broke down. The strike affected city buses, subways and trains that carry some 400,000 daily commuters.

SEPTA has refused to offer one dime of new money, said Harry Lombardo, president of TWU Local 234. The union had been working without a contract since March 14.

The 5,200 union members sought a 3 percent wage increase in each of the next three years, similar to a proposal offered to Pittsburgh transit workers. An offer of 2 percent, 2 percent and 3 percent was turned down about six hours before the strike.

City and state officials have said they won't increase subsidies to the authority or support an increase in what already is one of the highest transit fares in the nation — $1.60 a ride.

Elsewhere in Philadelphia, privatization reared its ugly head, with some 350 nursing home workers laid off after the city signed a contract with Episcopal Hospital to operate Philadelphia Nursing Home.

Most of the workers were able to move to other city jobs, and some others stayed and organized under the new owner, eventually gaining a contract, said Rhaschida Perry, spokeswoman for AFSCME District Council 33, which represents 10,000 city workers.

"A major problem we have had is the city not providing information on the total cost of these private contracts," she said. The union had to file an unfair labor practice charge against the city to gain access to this information.

The national pattern is for city governments to try to force workers to pay for everything — and the Philadelphia teachers' experience fits that standard, said AFT Local 3 President Ted Kirsch, who also is secretary-treasurer of the Philadelphia AFL-CIO. "It's happening in union after union. It's not just the local union battle — it's everyone's battle."

Like many states after the November elections, New Yorkers face a Republican mayor and a Republican governor. The governor wants funding cut for the cities and the mayor takes it out on the workers.

Mayor Rudolph Giuliani has proposed privatizing city hospitals to balance the budget. AFSCME District Council 37 President Stanley Hill calls that a "cynical ploy by the city to wash its hands of its legal responsibility for public health care."

When given the chance, public employees are proving they can outperform the privatized work forces. AFSCME Local 1455 outbid private companies to provide the installation and repair of street signs in New York City.

In the deal, the union also agreed to increase the number of signs it installs or repairs over the next year to 54,000, up from 35,000. The union will do so with the current 27 workers in the Department of Transportation, down from 49 over the last year because of Giuliani's budget cuts.

Giuliani called the arrangement a "landmark" that would save the city $1 million this year. The union and the administration negotiated the increased productivity after the mayor's office had sought and received bids from several private companies to do some of the sign repairs for about $1 million.

"This is yet another example of how, on a level playing field, city workers can compete and succeed as well or better than any private contractor," said AFSCME's Hill.

Over the last year, the mayor has turned over an array of municipal services to private companies, from parks maintenance to repaving city streets.

In Chicago, "It's open house on labor," said Jackie Gallagher, spokeswoman for the Chicago Teachers Union. "They're going crazy in a lot of different areas. A Senate committee has approved legislation prohibiting strikes for teachers and other legislation will take away almost everything in our contracts, including tenure and our current certification process."

Teachers in Los Angeles have taken 10 percent pay cuts over the last two years, said Katherine Carey, AFT spokeswoman. The union, which represents 32,000 teachers, is hoping to gain more than the proposed cost-of-living adjustment.

In Washington, D.C., the Service Employees' Justice for Janitors campaign included a week of rallies and marches to call attention to the D.C. government giving millions of dollars worth of concessions to real estate developers while workers bear the brunt of the city's $722 million deficit.

Thousands participated in the protests and more than 300 were arrested in the demonstrations.

"The council is cutting taxes for the rich while it closes public schools a week early and eliminates police overtime," said SEIU's Manny Pastreich.

Pastreich criticized the council's effort to roll back commercial property tax rates, which would cost the District some $40 million. About $32 million of that total would go to commercial building owners, while the typical homeowner would save only about $16.

Meanwhile, salaries for the city's 21,000 unionized workers were expected to drop 12 percent April 2 under legislation approved by the City Council to save $70 million. Non-essential city employees are being furloughed for 10 days before the fiscal year ends Sept. 30.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Service Employees President John J. Sweeney leads a protest in the District of Columbia over tax breaks for rich landowners like Oliver Carr during a time when city workers are being furloughed and services cut. SEIU's Justice for Janitors campaign joined in coalition with other groups for the protests, which included civil disobedience and arrests.

New York unionists protest huge state budget cut proposals

By Colleen M. O'Neill

New York trade unionists have taken to the streets and to the media in a fight over proposed cuts by the new Republican administration of Gov. George E. Pataki.

The latest rally — 6,000 strong — brought together members of the Public Employees Federation (AFT and Service Employees), AFSCME, Civil Service Employees Association, Communications Workers and others in the state capital of Albany.

Pataki's budget proposal slashes funds for education, public services and training, and could result in a total job loss approaching 250,000.

"Pataki's cuts not only are bad social policy — they're bad economic policy," said New York State AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Paul F. Cole. The 1987 tax "giveaway" coupled with the tax cut in the current proposal leads nowhere but into red ink, he said. It would give a few dollars to the middle class and thousands to the wealthy.

Among the other effects of Pataki's budget are:

- Cuts of more than $500 million from public colleges and universities, with students and their families expected to make up the difference through tuition increases of up to $1,800 a year.
- A freeze on money for education, with teacher layoffs and increased class sizes at a time when student enrollment will be increasing.
- Almost $4 billion less in Medicaid spending, with across-the-board cuts in attendant services — and jobs.

The Emergency Coalition to Save New York's Health Care — including representatives from labor, religious groups, community organizations and health care providers — stands in opposition to the draconian cuts advocated by Pataki. Union members of the coalition include the Amalgamated Transit Union, AFSCME, CWA, New York State Nurses Association, Public Employees Federation, SEIU, Teamsters and the unaffiliated 1199 National Health and Human Service Employees Union.

The planned cuts would mean the loss of $1.3 billion in hospital funding, $900 million for nursing homes, $841 million earmarked for home care and $300 million for mental health, with various other providers having to absorb a $600 million funding cut.

"These cuts are a catastrophe for working people that will destroy lives as surely as a natural disaster. But this is a man-made disaster," said Stanley Hill, executive director of AFSCME District Council 37. "Rather than keeping what works in Medicaid and evaluating and changing for the better what doesn't, these cuts take a sledgehammer approach to New York's entire health care system.

"Politicians who ought to know better are targeting the elderly, the disabled, children, patients in need of home care and the poor as their special targets," he said. "It must be stopped."

The Greater New York Hospital Association said the plan would mean closing some hospitals, accompanied by widespread layoffs of health care providers. Some job loss estimates have ranged as high as 50,000 nurses, hospital, home care and mental health workers.

The coalition and many others have been doggedly opposing Pataki's plan since early February. A march and rally March 1 by 40,000 people traveled city streets from the Empire State Building to Bellevue Hospital, stopping traffic along the way.

Other demonstrations have been held in New York City at City Hall, outside the mayor's office and in front of numerous hospitals and health centers, while groups have been gathering frequently outside various state office buildings in Albany, said Ted Jacobsen, secretary of the New York City AFL-CIO.

Other groups fighting Pataki's budget are the Graduate Student Employee Union/Communications Workers Local 1188, Citizen Action of New York, New York State Council of Churches, New York State National Organization for Women, Coalition of Voluntary Mental Health Agencies, Children's Defense Fund, New York State Council of Senior Citizens, AIDS Coalition and the New York State Jobs with Justice/Health Care Campaign.

Stand Up

for Health and Safety





It's the Fight of Our Lives! • Workers Memorial Day, April 28th

The Men and Women of the AFL-CIO Leading the Fight for America's Working Families

UNION NEWS

BARGAINING

Geneva Steel pact ratified

The Steelworkers overwhelmingly ratified a new three-year contract with Geneva Steel that raises wages by 9 percent for some 2,150 employees.

Under the agreement approved March 22, the workers will receive a 3 percent raise in each year, with the first increase retroactive to March 1, said Kelly Hansen, an official of USWA Local 2701 in Vineyard, Utah. The previous agreement expired Feb. 28.

The company also agreed to increase its contribution to the pension plan from 4 percent of gross payroll to 4.5 percent this year and 5 percent next year. The company will make a partial match beginning in March 1996 for employee contributions to a 401(k) plan.

A fund for future retiree health care will be created by Geneva, which bought the Vineyard plant from USX in 1987. Only those retirees who had enough service with USX currently receive benefits.

Contract boosts 20,000

The Food and Commercial Workers approved a new three-year master agreement with several supermarkets in Washington's Puget Sound area that raises wages by $1 for top-rated clerks.

The contract covers some 20,000 workers at three major area food chains — Safeway Stores, Lucky Stores and Albertson's — as well as a number of independent operators, said UFCW Regional Director Bob Morrand.

The agreement, which becomes effective April 30, calls for an initial 30-cents-per-hour raise for senior clerks, with 35-cent increases in each of 1996 and 1997. Journeymen meat cutters will get increases of 35 cents in the first year and 40 cents in each of the two remaining years. Other employees will receive proportionate wage increases.

Bloomingdale's pact extended

Some 2,600 employees of Bloomingdale's in New York City received pay increases ranging between $8 and $35 per week March 1, the day a one-year extension of the current contract began.

The wage adjustment varies by length of service, with those hired before Aug. 1, 1993, getting the largest increase, said John O'Neill, president of Local 3 of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union.

The one-year extension was necessary to help Bloomingdale's emerge from bankruptcy, company officials said. A full-blown contract will be negotiated next year, they said.

The extension establishes a new minimum hire rate of $5.50 per hour. It also creates a special $25,000 fund to upgrade employees who have five years of service as of April 1, 1995.

Writers Guild wins accords

Members of the Writers Guild ratified contracts with the major networks and the motion picture industry.

The three-year contracts, approved March 28, cover about 10,000 writers on both coasts in the film, broadcast, cable and interactive media industries. One contract covers employees of CBS, NBC and ABC. The other is with the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP).

The union achieved one of its major goals by closing the gap between the residual and minimum payments made to writers at the three major networks and those at Fox Broadcasting Co. The lower Fox payments had become an issue for all Hollywood guilds as Fox expanded.

The agreement was reached under the auspices of the joint Contract Adjustment Committee, which includes the guilds, the networks and the AMPTP. Negotiations generally are conducted jointly, but the networks and the AMPTP decided in December to bargain separately because of the issues at Fox.

An agreement with NBC, CBS and ABC was struck in December, but ratification was delayed when the AMPTP deal was reached Jan. 28.

URW ratifies Pirelli contract

Strikers back to work, retiree benefits guaranteed

By James B. Parks

Two weeks after ending a bitter eight-month strike, the Rubber Workers ratified a three-year master contract with Pirelli Armstrong Tire Corp.

The new agreement, which took effect March 27, "includes the return of all previously discharged employees and includes lifetime benefits for all future retirees," URW President Kenneth L. Coss said. Coss praised the members of Locals 670 in Nashville and 703 in Hanford, Calif., "for their perseverance in this long struggle."

Workers were able to maintain their cost-of-living adjustments in the new contract, said Local 670 President Stan Johnson, a member of the negotiating committee. Pirelli had wanted to eliminate lifetime medical benefits for retirees, Johnson said, but the new contract continues them for all current and future pensioners. In addition, the pact will improve retirement benefits by $4 a month per year of service, he said.

Retirement benefits were a key issue in negotiations. During the strike, the URW went to court to stop Pirelli from unilaterally terminating health care benefits of retirees. The union filed suit after the company said it would end benefits for 3,200 retirees and surviving spouses 90 days after the previous contract expired.

In addition to hiring 1,200 replacements, Pirelli had discharged 99 strikers for strike-related activities, so the return of those workers also was key. All have been reinstated with full seniority, Johnson said. Initially, 1,000 workers were on strike, but about 150 retired over the course of the walkout. Some of the replacements may remain to fill the jobs of the retired workers, the union said.

The agreement sets average wages at $16.34 instead of $17 per hour, far less than the $2.50 cut the company sought, Johnson said.

The URW walked out July 15, 1994, when the previous contract with the Italian-owned company expired. Negotiations broke down, the union said, over Pirelli's demands for reduced wages, health care cuts and severely reduced retiree benefits.

The workers returned to work March 13 and talks resumed two days later. A tentative agreement was reached March 23 and ratified March 27.

The union on Feb. 28 had unconditionally offered to return to work after the National Labor Relations Board changed the status of the walkout to an unfair labor practices strike retroactive to Sept. 8. The company acted improperly, the board ruled, by hiring the striker replacements and by unilaterally imposing new terms of employment at the two plants.

Considering the circumstances, the contract was the best for everyone, Johnson said. "After eight months on strike, the company needed a contract as much as we needed our jobs back," he said. The union remains on strike against Bridgestone/Firestone in the longest walkout in its history.

UAW, GM press joint health care efforts

By Colleen M. O'Neill

Congress's failure to address health care reform has not slowed the efforts of the UAW to cut costs and gain coverage for all.

The union and General Motors Corp. have agreed to jointly administer a new program in Flint, Mich., and Anderson, Ind., based on community planning for health care needs.

The pilot program will seek the views of union members, providers, insurers, political and civic leaders and those without insurance to determine the needs of the area and how best to meet them, a UAW official said.

"We are major players in those areas and we intend to influence the discussion in a positive direction, involving everyone in the community," said UAW spokesman Reg McGhee.

The UAW and GM have hired a consulting firm to study the situation, with a report expected sometime this summer. Using those conclusions, the two plan to put forth plans to be implemented over several years.

The residents of Rochester, N.Y., already enjoy the results of a program set up in that area, said McGhee, who noted that the UAW has pursued community planning for several years. While there is a high percentage of people in Rochester enrolled in health maintenance organizations, he said, the result has been lower health costs for UAW members there than in such places as Flint and Anderson.

GM currently spends more than $3.5 billion yearly to cover the cost of health care for 1.7 million employees, retirees and their families. The company projects a savings of $174 million by following the Rochester example.

"There's no way to project savings now, because they haven't happened yet," McGhee said, "but if the company can achieve savings in one area, the union can reasonably request to see some of those savings elsewhere" in the form of profit-sharing, wages or additional benefits.

The more rational use of a community's resources likely would mean the extension of health care to those without, McGhee pointed out, which would lower the overall costs by lessening the use of emergency rooms for routine care.

Many people who lack health insurance typically forgo visiting a physician until the problem becomes acute or chronic, and then seek help at a hospital emergency room — the most expensive form of treatment — because they know they can't be turned away.

USWA gains bonuses for 13,000 at shipyard

Steelworkers overwhelmingly approved a new 50-month contract with Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Co. that provides some 13,000 production and maintenance workers with three lump-sum bonuses.

The agreement "will provide Newport News Shipbuilding employees and their families with much-needed improvements in medical and increased pensions. The three bonuses will give families added and needed income over the life of the contract," said chief union negotiator Judy Boyd.

Employees will receive a ratification bonus of 5 percent, followed by a 4 percent bonus in July 1996 and a 3 percent bonus in December 1997.

The contract includes new language calling for a commitment to quality, providing for joint efforts to improve efficiency and productivity, as well as for union oversight to ensure compliance with the contract.

"This concept underscores the value and importance of labor and management working together to help make the shipyard more able to compete for new work," Boyd said. "This new partnership is empowering to the work force. After all, it is the person closest to the process that is in the best position to improve it."

A new joint committee will look at issues that affect both the shipyard and the union and make recommendations, a company spokesman said.

The contract adds a successor clause and requires that the union be informed about such company operations as contracting out. Seniority rights are expanded so that, in case of layoff, an employee could displace the least senior employee from his or her previous job function when the skill and ability are relatively equal, the union said.

The contract also includes a managed-care health plan that features no deductible, lower co-payments and a lower out-of-pocket limit than under the previous plan. In addition, the contract raises pension benefits by $3 to $25 per month per year of service.

"Although these were tough negotiations," Boyd said, "the bargaining atmosphere was positive. The company was responsive to the union's needs and concerns. The foundation, which was laid in 1980, has continued to grow, with mutual respect, into a solid labor-management relationship."

Boycott squeeze play boosts IBT at Dolphin

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

An AFL-CIO boycott of Walt Disney World's Dolphin Hotel got a major league boost that the Teamsters converted into a home run.

Less than a week after the Major League Baseball Players Association supported the boycott by canceling plans to conduct negotiations at the hotel, workers gained their first contract, almost two years after they voted for representation by IBT Local 385.

"You don't see the hotel workers on TV every weekend, but they are all stars at what they do," said IBT President Ron Carey. "They do their part to make Disney World a favorite vacation, and they deserve some basic respect in return. The Teamsters salute the players' recognition of hotel workers as being part of their team."

Labor had come down strongly in the baseball players' corner at the AFL-CIO Executive Council meeting in Bal Harbour, Fla., where Carey also announced that the IBT would not deliver beer and other concessions to ballparks where scabs were playing.

The contract provides a new pay formula, disability insurance and improved life insurance, as well as job security and seniority provisions. The contract covers 330 full- and part-time cleaning, laundry and maintenance workers.

The pay formula will increase the top rate for housekeeping staff to $9.70 per hour in the last year of the contract, which runs until March 23, 1999. Housekeepers are the largest component in the bargaining unit.

The agreement also breaks new ground in an area that was particularly urgent for the workers — discriminatory language practices. With the assistance of the union, three workers in October 1994 had filed a class-action suit charging that the hotel's "English-only" policy discriminated against the largely Haitian and Latino staff.

Materials essential to their duties and safety on the job had been written in English only. As part of the agreement, management said it would correct this problem.

All safety signs will be posted in English, Spanish and Creole. The company handbook and all rules will be distributed in Spanish and Creole as well as in English. Any disciplinary actions placed in a worker's file also will be translated into Spanish or Creole.

The company also agreed to make English-as-a-second-language classes available on site and the union will translate the collective bargaining agreement into Spanish and Creole.

"This is a pioneering contract," said Ron Carver, chief union negotiator and director of IBT strategic campaigns. "This may be the only contract in the country with this kind of language protection. In the general re-emergence of meanness toward immigrants, this is significant."

Other contract provisions include a five-step grievance procedure and a joint committee to address issues such as work load and scheduling.

"These newest Teamsters took a stand for dignity and fairness on the job and they have won a good, solid contract," said Carey. "Because these workers stood up, there is now a higher standard for all workers who are discriminated against because of their language."

Some of the workers even traveled to Washington last October to appeal to members of Congress and to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for a full investigation of the hotel for its discriminatory policy.

The company fired some 40 union supporters since the organizing campaign began. But the National Labor Relations Board issued a complaint last June, ruling that the hotel's conduct violated the National Labor Relations Act.

The agreement resolves the grievances brought against the hotel by the workers and ends the AFL-CIO boycott against Dolphin and its co-owned sister hotel, the Swan.



UFW photo

Farm Workers President Arturo Rodriguez signs a contract with Bear Creek Production Co., the nation's largest rose producer. Among the participants are UFW Vice President and co-founder Dolores Huerta, left, and Bear Creek CEO Bill Williams.

UFW bargaining comes up roses

The Farm Workers are celebrating new contracts negotiated in just one week for nearly 2,000 workers at two California employers.

UFW President Arturo Rodriguez noted that the contracts "are the greatest monuments to Cesar Chavez," coming nearly two years after the legendary farm labor leader's death and just before his birthday, March 31, was marked for the first time as an official state holiday.

The contracts cover some 1,400 workers at the Wasco, Calif.-based Bear Creek Production Co., the nation's largest rose grower, and 360 workers at Schied Vineyard in the Salinas Valley.

The bargaining successes also came just three months after the UFW won its eighth consecutive election victory since beginning a new field organizing drive in April 1994. Since then, the UFW also has negotiated 21 union contracts covering more than 3,700 farm workers.

The three-year contract with Bear Creek brings the rose workers under the UFW's comprehensive family medical plan and pension program, both of which are 100 percent employer paid. The contract also includes an 8 percent wage increase, nine paid holidays, including Chavez's birthday, for permanent workers, and a grievance and arbitration procedure.

The employer also agreed to pay a representative to work with the union's negotiation committee to administer the contract. Other benefits include bereavement leave, a seniority system and one day of paid leave for political action and education.

The excitement of gaining the new contract spurred more than 100 workers to travel four hours in order to attend the signing of the contract.

The three-month intensive organizing campaign at Bear Creek produced a union win Dec. 16, with a contract following on March 16. Rodriguez called the collective bargaining agreement a "tremendous victory" that sets the stage for future organizing wins.

Bear Creek President and CEO Bill Williams celebrated the first union contract in the company's history by emphasizing "the need to extend medical, dental, pension and holiday benefits to seasonal workers."

The one-year contract with Scheid Vineyard, a wine grape company, establishes a base minimum wage of $8, compared with $5 or $6 for most non-union farm workers. Other benefits include coverage under the union's medical and pension plans, paid vacations and holidays, grievance and arbitration procedures and seniority provisions.

The employer will contribute 98 cents an hour per employee to the medical plan and 15 cents an hour per employee to the pension plan.

The union also is negotiating contracts with 33 employers covering more than 13,000 farm workers, and has expanded its organizing efforts to Arizona, Texas, Florida and Washington state, Rodriguez said.

— By Sharolyn A. Rosier

ACTWU gains quick first pact at Tultex plant

Seven months after voting for representation by the Clothing and Textile Workers, workers at Tultex Corp.'s plant in Martinsville, Va., gained their first contract.

The three-year agreement, covering some 2,300 workers who manufacture fleecewear and T-shirts, provides across-the-board increases of 5 percent in the first year and 4 percent in both the second and third years, boosting the current average wage of $8 an hour.

Ernest Bennett, ACTWU's assistant southern regional director, attributed the short time it took to negotiate the contract to the "overwhelming" level of support the union received in the election. The union won the Aug. 17-18 election by a vote of 1,321 to 710. After the election, the company became more interested in "doing business than fighting the union," he added.

Kathy Rogers, Tultex's director of communications, praised the contract for allowing "the company to retain a competitive cost structure," adding that it is a good contract for both workers and the company.

While 260 sewing-machine workers will not receive increases, the company guaranteed that those workers could not be laid off for the life of the contract. The sewing jobs are the ones most threatened by low-wage offshore operations.

All workers also will receive Christmas bonuses of 2 percent of annual pay in 1995, 2.2 percent in 1996 and 2.4 percent in 1997. Those bonuses had been eliminated by the company several years ago.

Pension benefits were doubled for past service and more than doubled for future service, according to the union. Previously, the average pension was $3 to $5 per month per year of service, depending on salary. Employees now will receive an additional $5 per month per year of service for past service and $12 per month per year of service for all future service.

In addition, a dental care deductible of $50 was eliminated and the deductible for single coverage was reduced from $300 to $200 per year. The family deductible was set at $500.

Under the contract, bargaining unit members will not pay any increases in health care premiums for the first two years, although the parties will reopen the contract in the third year to discuss premium increases and new benefits.

Employees will receive time-and-one-half pay for work beyond their regular shifts, for any work on holidays and for 12-hour workers after three days of work in a week.

The ACTWU win at Tultex was the largest NLRB election victory in the textile industry since the historic J.P Stevens campaign of the mid-1970s, a campaign also waged by ACTWU. Organizers used a number of innovative tactics, including involving the entire community through the local cable television outlet.



Photos by Michael Sacco/IBEW

A Decatur rally ends with unionists raising hands and voices in rendition of "Solidarity Forever."

Labor pledges stand in Decatur

Continued from Page 1

paramilitary guards it hired from union-buster Vance Security, who filmed the picketing activity by Kirkland, Donahue and AFL-CIO council members.

The group also stopped at the food bank operated out of Paperworkers Local 7837, which provides food and necessities to as many as 800 families affected by the lockout by A.E. Staley.

They visited the UPIU local's corporate campaign headquarters and also met with AFSCME members at the Adolf Meyer Center, a mental health facility the state government is threatening to close.

During the rally, each union officer brought a message of hope to the crowd and a pledge of support for the assistance fund.

Service Employees President John J. Sweeney spoke of the problems his union members faced in dealing with an international employer, and how winning required the unity and efforts of the worldwide labor community.

James J. Norton, president of the Graphic Communications Union, told how GCIU members fought against union-busting in Tennessee.

Machinists President George Kourpias reminded the crowd that the nation was built by workers, not "by boards of directors thousands of miles and many oceans away,. . . not by the seven-figure officials who exist to break every law of the American workplace."

Steelworkers President George Becker provided a fitting close to the day, as he recounted the 20-month-long strike at Ravenswood Aluminum Co., in which workers were replaced by scabs, set upon by state police and forced into a long struggle they didn't want.

But at the end of those 20 months, Becker declared, with just a dozen or so workers having crossed the picket line out of a 1,400-person work force, "union members marched back into the plants and to their jobs. And the scabs were marched out under the eye of those same state police."

The crowd also heard from Illinois AFL-CIO President Don Johnson, who outlined the attack on working families coming from the state capitol, where legislators are moving to cut workers' compensation and restrict labor laws.



AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland talks with a volunteer at a Paperworkers food bank in Decatur.

Also participating were Glenn Goss, UPIU vice president and regional director; Paul Korman, UAW assistant regional director; and local union presidents Roger Gates, URW Local 713; Larry Solomon, UAW Local 751; and Dave Watts, UPIU Local 7837.

Contributions to help the strikers may be sent to the AFL-CIO Fund for Strike Relief, 815 15th St., N.W., Room 703, Washington, D.C. 20006.

URW sues Bridgestone over retiree benefits

The Rubber Workers filed suit to force Bridgestone/Firestone to restore health care benefits that were reduced in January for some 20,000 retirees.

"We believe that retirees' benefits are for life, and that those retired members are covered under what was legally negotiated at the bargaining table," said URW President Kenneth L. Coss. "A contract is a contract."

Bridgestone/Firestone notified the URW retirees Jan. 1 that the company was reducing their prescription drug benefits and freezing some of their Medicare reimbursements.

"This action was taken against all U.S. Bridgestone/Firestone retirees," said URW General Counsel Charles Armstrong. The suit, filed March 30 in U.S. District Court in Nashville, seeks a permanent injunction to force the company to reinstate the benefits and to pay damages.

Under the last contract with the company, which expired in 1991, retirees were assured lifetime benefits, Armstrong said. The fact that there is no contract now does not excuse the company from paying the lifetime benefits.

The union claims the company did not have the right to change or amend the benefits, Armstrong said. It is a clear case of breach of contract, he said.

The suit is a class action suit on behalf of the union, 10 locals and 12 individual retirees.

Some 4,200 URW members have been on strike against the Japanese-owned tire manufacturer for nearly nine months. Talks between the two sides resumed March 13. The company has "permanently replaced" about 2,300 of the striking employees. The strike is the longest on record for the union, surpassing a 141-day strike in 1976.

Pilots, USAir pact poised for takeoff

By David Kameras

After eight months of difficult bargaining, the Air Line Pilots' negotiating committee has reached a tentative agreement with USAir management for a five-year concession package as part of its plan "to reduce USAir's costs and ensure the future of our airline."

Few details of the proposed contract were made available, but the pilots had said they would be willing to trade a portion of their pay and work-rule changes in exchange for "financial returns and governance participation."

Management has been seeking some $500 million a year in labor cost reductions. Talks are continuing with the Flight Attendants, the Machinists and the Transport Workers.

The agreement awaits approval by the union's master executive council, USAir's board and stockholders and ratification by ALPA's 5,200 USAir members.

Flight Attendant safety

Meanwhile, a small charter airline has succeeded in stalling implementation of a new federal rule that would enhance the health and safety of flight attendants working throughout the commercial aviation industry.

The Federal Aviation Administration was set to put into place new rules limiting the number of hours flight attendants can work. However, a federal appeals court granted a stay to Sun Country Airlines, a carrier with about 340 flight attendants, although the stay affects some 85,000 attendants on every airline.

"This is a tremendous step backward for airline safety," said AFA President Patricia Friend. "We urge all other airlines to voluntarily comply with the rules for the sake of improved safety."

The rule would give flight attendants at least nine hours of scheduled rest for duty periods of up to 14 hours within a 24-hour period. With the stay in place, flight attendants remain the only safety-sensitive workers in the industry not covered by duty limits.

The AFA has also called on the FAA to require airlines to take steps to "significantly increase the amount of fresh air available in the cabin," following a report from the Centers for Disease Control that four passengers and crew members became infected with tuberculosis on a domestic flight last year.

BMWE seeks separate negotiations with Conrail

Management's intransigence has derailed contract talks with Consolidated Rail Corp.

The Maintenance of Way Employees broke off talks with Conrail March 21 because of the carrier's "utter unwillingness to bargain" one-on-one with the union, which represents more than 3,000 rail workers.

Management insists on bargaining on a multiemployer basis through the National Railway Labor Conference (NRLC), which also represents seven other major freight carriers.

A U.S. district court decision in February said federal law does not require BMWE to bargain on a multiemployer basis, but the court didn't say the company had to go one-on-one with the union, either. BMWE has appealed the decision.

The union said further attempts at arranging talks would be "futile and would eventually accomplish nothing more than further delay."

The BMWE also has been involved in a national strike and lockout by Canada's national railroads, and the government in Ottawa has ordered workers at CN North America back to work.

In another matter, the U.S. Supreme Court let stand a lower court decision that only employees or their unions can request National Mediation Board involvement in disputes stemming from rail mergers, acquisitions and consolidations.

The NMB in 1987 decided that employers could invoke the board's jurisdiction in such cases, and dissolved 85 union certifications, replacing them with 15 systemwide certifications affecting the same workers. This prompted the Railway Labor Executives' Association and 18 unions to file suit.

WORLD

Middle East unions lead

The Israeli and Palestinian trade union federations have signed a landmark agreement outlining a framework of cooperation between the two movements.

The document, signed March 5 in Tel Aviv by Haim Ramon, chairman of Histadrut, Shaher Sa'ed, general secretary of the Palestine General Federation of Trade Unions, and Amir Peretz, chairman of the Trade Union Department, is the first non-governmental agreement between the two sides.

''The real essence of peace is the way it is implemented by ordinary people in everyday life,'' said Ramon.

The agreement establishes several joint committees, including one of senior officers from the parties to solve the problems of the Palestinian workers in Israel. Histadrut agreed to pay to the PGFTU half the dues from those Palestinian workers, with the other half used by Histadrut for union activities to defend the rights of the workers in Israel.

Union role seen in Ireland

Economic progress is crucial for bringing permanent peace to Ireland and labor unions could make a valuable contribution to the process, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Thomas R. Donahue told a congressional committee.

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions has proposed a ''sensible'' interim program for reconstruction of Ireland that would target the use of American trade and aid to areas where it is most needed, Donahue told the House International Relations Committee.

He also urged the panel to continue to include the MacBride Principles against employment discrimination as part of the U.S. policy toward Ireland, while working for a permanent fair employment law.

Company blamed for death

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland strongly protested the corporate behavior that led to the death of Salvadoran labor activist Julia Esperanza Quintanilla, an employee of the Korean-owned company GABO, which supplies clothing to several large U.S. companies.

On March 1, after developing severe stomach pains, she was denied permission to go see a doctor. When she went on her lunch hour, she was turned away because GABO had failed to make its mandatory payments into the health system. She died later that night.

This case shows how mistaken the U.S. Trade Representative was to end the three-year review of the AFL-CIO's petition to withdraw El Salvador's special trading privileges, Kirkland said in letters to Trade Representative Mickey Kantor, Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich and Laura Tyson, chair of the Council of Economic Advisers.

Kirkland also wrote Salvadoran President Calderon Sol, demanding an investigation and enforcement of El Salvador's labor laws.

Multinationals trash Malaysia

Fight for worker rights faces new-age colonialism

By David Kameras

Multinational corporations, acting as states within themselves, are a major contributing factor in the poor wages and working conditions prevalent throughout Southeast Asia, a Malaysian trade union leader declared.

''Twenty years ago, when the International Labor Organization was talking about multinationals, I thought it was a very strange subject,'' said Govindasamy Rajasekaran, secretary general of the Malaysian Trades Union Congress (MTUC). ''Today, I realize how powerful multinational corporations are. They've got more power and more influence than governments themselves.

''Very often these companies, when they come into a country, try to dictate terms,'' he said. ''They say, 'If you don't allow this, we may have to re-think our investment, we may want to pull out of this country, some of the others may not come.

''We see this working in every developing country throughout the world,'' Rajasekaran said. ''They are the parliament, not the country. They decide what laws they want, especially when it comes to investment laws or labor legislation.''

Rajasekaran, in Washington to discuss worker rights as part of the Fred Friendly Seminars airing on Public Broadcasting System stations in the fall, said the Malaysian government has blocked worker rights in ''pioneer industries'' as a result of pressure from the multinationals. The largest sector affected by this policy is the electronics industry, which employs 150,000 workers.

Sometimes allowing only ''in-house'' unions, sometimes exercising an outright ban on organizing, the government has delayed and rejected efforts by electronics workers to freely organize for decades. As a result, ''the wages and working conditions in the electronics industry in comparison to the profits remain far behind,'' Rajasekaran said.

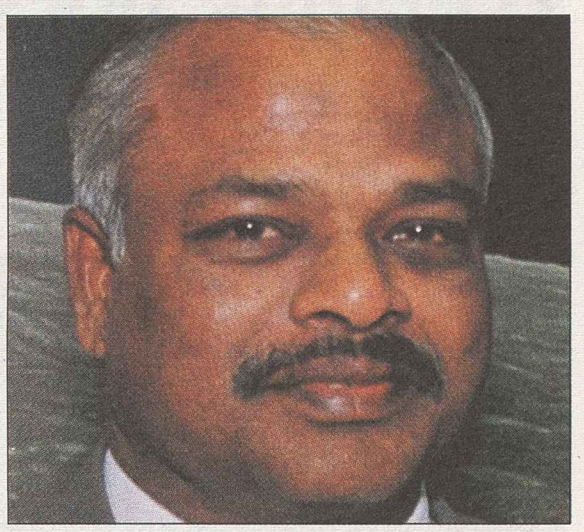
By contrast, electrical workers are permitted to unionize, resulting in a pay gap with electronics workers of 30 percent in big cities and 50 percent in rural areas. Determinations as to which industry a plant belongs cannot be challenged in court.

According to the International Metalworkers' Federation, ''Malaysia is alone in the world with its artificial division of the electrical and electronics industry and its de facto prohibition on organization in the electronics field.''

Another key to the pattern of exploitation in the electronics industry, where workers are 80 percent female, has been the recruitment of young women, who have been described as ''tractable, being used to obedience to men within their traditional social structures.''

According to a 1975 investment brochure, ''The manual dexterity of the Oriental female is famous the world over. Her hands are small and she works fast with extreme care. Who, therefore, should be better qualified by nature and inheritance to contribute to the efficiency of bench-assembly production lines than the Oriental girl?''

Companies also use the threat of moving from one country to another in order to get their way, Rajasekaran said. ''Today it will be Malaysia, and as Malaysian conditions keep improving, they will look at Vietnam and China as the next fields where they can play.''



''(Multinational corporations) are the parliament, not the country. They decide what laws they want, especially when it comes to investment laws or labor legislation.''

— Govindasamy Rajasekaran, Malaysian Trades Union Congress leader

The Internal Security Act, which allows detainment for two-year periods without trial, also has been interpreted for use against trade unionists who ''threaten'' national security by calling for worker rights.

Because of these conditions, the AFL-CIO in 1988 petitioned the U.S. Trade Representative to withdraw Malaysia from the Generalized System of Preferences, which gives favorable tariff treatment to some developing countries. In cases like Malaysia, U.S. taxpayers are unwittingly subsidizing exploitation by multinational corporations, the federation argues.

While electronics workers are prevented from engaging in collective action, the AFL-CIO found, ''ironically, the industry's American employers, guests in a foreign country, have been free to organize and register their own Malaysian Electronic Industry Society, and thereby are enjoying a right that they and the Malaysian government conspire to deny the citizens of Malaysia.''

Nor is coercion limited to Malaysian workers alone. Last year, General Electric brought pressure to bear on an American local union by arguing that the federation's petition on GSP threatened a major contract with Malaysia, even though the contract was in fact not covered under the GSP program and would in no way be affected by U.S. policy.

In addition, union-busting firms that provide advice to American corporations have been recruited to help teach their Malaysian counterparts how to counter efforts by the MTUC.

Rajasekaran called for inclusion of a social clause in trade rules — ''the right to have a union, or to say that children should be in school and not at work'' should be in it, he said, and ''you should not put people in prison so you can have a supply of free labor.''

''We believe a country has to be judged by the living standards of its workers,'' he said.

Development summit puts worker rights high on agenda

By Candice Johnson

The United Nations World Summit for Social Development examined three pressing global problems — employment, poverty and social integration — and adopted a program of action that included the need to safeguard worker rights.

The gathering brought together representatives of 120 countries — with delegations that included government leaders and representatives from labor, business, civic, religious and social organizations. Some 25 nations had trade union representatives in their delegations.

The session was called to discuss how the world's nations could work together to fight poverty, create jobs and help citizens play a full role in their societies. The final products, a declaration signed by heads of state and a program of action, included a strong expression of worker rights, making it the first U.N. document — excluding those developed by the International Labor Organization — to address those concerns.

The program of action also put full employment back at the center of social policy, switching from the emphasis on inflation and monetary policy many nations had been pursuing.

Bill Jordan, general secretary of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, spoke about both growing joblessness and the millions of mainly women and children working in the ''informal sector'' under degrading and unacceptable conditions.

Clearly, the global economic system is not working efficiently or fairly, he said. But governments seeking to end the exploitation of workers and the waste of corporations can look to many of the world's most successful companies, which ''built their success on teamwork and participation, and decent pay and conditions,'' he said.

This conference, through its declaration and action plan, can send the message that ''for companies and countries, cooperation and justice are productive,'' he added.

Among the commitments pledged by the program of action:

- Creation of an economic, political, social, cultural and legal environment that will enable people to achieve social development.
- Eradication of world poverty by providing access to land, credit, education and other resources.
- Pursuit of the goal of ensuring quality jobs, safeguarding the basic rights and interests of workers, and to freely promote respect for relevant ILO conventions, including those pertaining to full workplace rights.

Those rights are the prohibition of forced and child labor, freedom of association, the right to organize and bargain collectively and the principle of non-discrimination, the document continued.

Economy doesn't lift worker buying power

By David Kameras

A slow-growth, piddling economy may be thrilling Wall Street, but it is hitting workers in the pocketbook.

Real weekly earnings declined a whopping 1.4 percent in February, primarily because of a 1.1 percent decline in the average number of weekly hours, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported. While average hourly earnings remained unchanged, consumer prices went up 0.3 percent.

The issue of stagnating wages during economic recovery has emerged as a basic structural problem. Average weekly earnings have withered 8.2 percent over the past 15 years, BLS data shows. For the year, they rose a minimal 0.3 percent.

Based on the February consumer price data, AFL-CIO economist Anne Draper estimates that an annual wage of $15,417, or $7.41 an hour, would be required to maintain an urban family of four at the poverty line.

The Clinton administration has proposed raising the minimum wage by 90 cents over two years, from the current $4.25 to $5.15. But even that minimal rise in the wage floor has left congressional Republicans sputtering that entry-level jobs will be lost as a result.

The argument anticipating job losses as a result of a raise in the minimum wage has been repudiated by several recent studies. Even Marvin Kosters, an economist with the conservative American Enterprise Institute, concedes that the new studies "give more plausibility to raising (the minimum wage)."

As the theory of substantial job loss becomes increasingly discredited, proponents of a minimum wage increase can focus more on its benefits. "The whole point would be to restore wages and income to groups who have lost terribly," said Lawrence Mishel, an economist with the Economic Policy Institute.

While the middle class has struggled to keep up with the cost of living, minimum wage workers have not even been close. When adjusted for inflation, the value of the federal minimum wage has fallen by nearly 50 cents since 1991.

With energy prices down, rising food prices pushed up the consumer price index (CPI-W). The 0.3 percent overall price rise in February included a 0.2 percent rise in the price of food, with substantial increases in cereals and bakery products (0.7 percent), fruits and vegetables (0.6 percent) and meat, poultry, fish and eggs (0.5 percent).

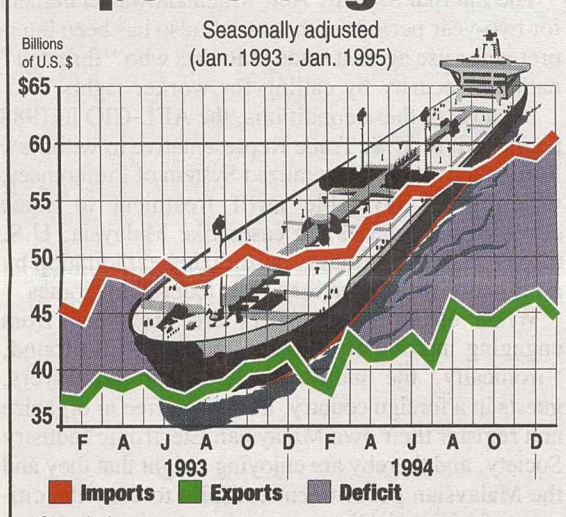
The prices of new vehicles also are up 3.1 percent over the year, but used car prices are 14.2 percent ahead of a year ago, including a 2.5 percent jump in February. The cost of financing a car also went up last month, by 0.6 percent.

CPI calculations, which are used in collective bargaining negotiations as well as to index benefits paid under such government programs as Social Security and veterans' benefits, have come under increasing and harsh political attack from Republicans bent on cutting social programs without incurring the wrath of voters.

The AFL-CIO cautioned against this move, triggered by suggestions by Alan Greenspan, chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, that the federal budget might be balanced through the reduction in the increases of these benefits.

In testimony submitted March 24 to the Senate Finance Committee, the AFL-CIO recommended that Congress not interfere with the Labor Department's current review of the CPI. "We believe the independence and authority of the Bureau of Labor Statistics must be maintained free of political hardball," the federation said.

U.S. exports and imports of goods*



*Census basis
Source: Bureau of the Census and Bureau of Economic Analysis

The continuing surge of imports, coupled with a decline in exports, produced a record monthly U.S. merchandise trade deficit of $16.3 billion in January. The shortfall, nearly $5 billion more than the preceding month's, broke the record of $15.9 billion set in December 1985. The report data conforms to a trend that saw the U.S. trade deficit in goods hit a near-record $151.1 in 1994.

Real Earnings	
February	-1.4 percent
From Feb. '94	+0.3 percent
From Feb. '80	-8.2 percent
Merchandise Trade Deficit	
January	$16.3 billion
December	$11.4 billion

AFL-CIO NEWSGRAFIC

Merchandise trade in record shortfall

The U.S. merchandise trade deficit skyrocketed in January, breaking all monthly records to reach a seasonally adjusted $16.3 billion, $4.9 billion more than the preceding month. The previous high, set in December 1985, was $15.9 billion.

Even trade in services, which historically is a surplus, shrank 12 percent for the month.

Contributing to this trade free fall was the bilateral activity with Mexico, which saw a $19 million goods surplus in December turn into an $863 million deficit in January. Exports to Mexico fell 9.8 percent, while imports rose 11 percent.

With the peso worth half what it was a year ago, this trend will continue throughout the year, potentially adding $10 billion to the U.S. trade deficit in 1995. The process will be exacerbated by the flight of industrial capital south of the border, where cheap labor costs now are even cheaper.

Direct foreign investment in Mexico reached $8 billion in 1994, 64 percent more than in the previous year, and half came from the United States. Mexico's economic bust, catastrophic to the workers there, is seen as a major opportunity in U.S. corporate boardrooms.

General Electric, for example, increased sales by its Mexican plants by about 18 percent in 1994, to more than $1 billion, with about half of that total exported back to the United States. GE plans to invest even more in Mexico this year, especially to take advantage of accelerated Mexican privatization in power generation, transportation and finance.

The 2,140 mostly American-owned maquiladora plants in Mexico near the U.S. border already had had a banner year before devaluation, and are now displacing tourism and petroleum as Mexico's official top generator of dollars. During the first 10 months of 1994, maquiladora employment increased 6.2 percent to 600,376 employees, and an employer association forecasts the opening of another 600 assembly plants this year.

Thus, U.S.-based multinational corporations have taken advantage of favorable conditions in Mexico and other developing countries to ensure that America buys much more than it sells, particularly the kind of products that typically create high-paying jobs — jobs that are now going overseas. For example, the $16.8 billion in exports of capital goods fell short of the $17.2 billion in imports in this important category.

"January's record merchandise trade deficit provides graphic evidence of the failure of government trade policy to bring order and balance to America's international economic relationships," said Mark Anderson, director of the AFL-CIO Task Force on Trade. "The impact of these unprecedented deficits on the jobs and income of American workers is severe."

Besides capital goods, other areas that recorded a deficit included clothing and footwear ($3.2 billion), cars and trucks ($2.9 billion), data processing and office equipment ($1.3 billion), telecommunications equipment ($1.1 billion), iron and steel products ($0.7 billion), electrical machinery ($0.6 billion), toys and sporting goods ($0.5 billion) and furniture ($0.4 billion). Shipments of aircraft fell by $1 billion.

In non-seasonally adjusted data, the U.S. trade deficit in goods with Japan improved somewhat, moving from $5.6 billion in December to $4.9 billion in January. However, that was canceled out by the trade gap with China, which grew from $2 billion to $2.7 billion. The merchandise trade deficit with Western Europe also jumped, rising from $206 million to $1.3 billion.

The White House said the January run up in the trade deficit "makes, again, a persuasive case that we need to do everything we can to open up markets overseas so there can be stronger commerce involving the sale of U.S. goods and services abroad."

— David Kameras

Job training useless without jobs, Congress told

While job training is essential for raising worker skill levels, it is of little value in the absence of more and better employment opportunities in restructured, high-performance workplaces, the AFL-CIO told a House panel.

Workers need a training system "where the federal government sets high standards of performance and accountability in a program fully grounded in local labor market needs," Legislative Representative Calvin P. Johnson told an Economic and Educational Opportunities subcommittee.

Such a restructured system should be responsive "both to the skill demands of employers and the career development plans of workers," he said. "A one-size-fits-all approach will not work."

Johnson pointed to the financial responsibilities of many unemployed workers and noted that individual training grants may be of little help to unemployed workers balancing immediate family survival with long-term employment security.

He also voiced the AFL-CIO's opposition to vouchers for school-aged youth, saying they should not be given incentives "to leave school early to obtain narrow skill training." Instead, efforts should focus on infusing more academic skills into occupational education programs and forming strong links between secondary and post-secondary vocational programs.

The federation offered a number of suggestions aimed at improving accountability within a national training system, with a revitalized Employment Service seen as key to quality evaluations.

Public-sector agencies "should play the role of the 'honest broker,' providing objective, quality information, vocational assessment and referral, job counseling, job search assistance and job development."

Funding levels also must meet the needs of all segments of the work force, Johnson said. "At a minimum, any proposal to give individual grants to unemployed and dislocated workers should provide training and education benefits equal to what veterans and national service participants currently receive."

The AFL-CIO urged better benefits for dislocated workers, especially those displaced by government policies in trade, defense downsizing and the environment, while retaining trade adjustment assistance (TAA) as a separate entity.

Johnson stressed the need for union involvement in school-to-work programs, and pointed to the history of successes in apprenticeship and joint training programs. "Labor participation in our nation's training system is more important now than ever," he said.

UNION NEWS

County workers get help

Organized labor is fighting efforts by elected officials in Orange County, Calif., to use a bankruptcy crisis to shed longstanding collective bargaining relationships and to privatize public assets.

County officials also have ignored any means to right the financial situation other than to dump on county workers, several affiliated unions said March 16 in requesting assistance from the AFL-CIO Strategic Approaches Committee. The affected unions include the Fire Fighters, AFSCME, Service Employees, AFT, Operating Engineers and Teamsters.

The committee, chaired by Mine Workers President Richard L. Trumka, has assigned AFL-CIO Organization and Field Services Department staff to build community and religious support for the workers and other staff will be assigned as needed.

Meanwhile, in a move supported by workers, the county supervisors voted March 30 to put a one-half-cent sales tax increase referendum on a special June 27 ballot.

BET added to boycott list

At the request of the Electrical Workers, Black Entertainment Television has been added to the AFL-CIO boycott list.

Staff technicians and other broadcast workers voted in IBEW Local 1200 on Aug. 10, 1994, but the company has refused to bargain. The AFL-CIO, through its Strategic Approaches Committee, is assisting the workers in their campaign to fight the anti-union tactics of CEO Robert Johnson.

Cable TV companies will be asked to withdraw their programming agreements with BET, said Jack Stanley of the IBEW.

Unions, HUD in pact

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development signed a $3.5 million agreement with the Carpenters and Painters to fund training for public housing residents across the United States.

The unions will train unemployed and underemployed residents in skills such as lead abatement. The program also will start the residents on a track for pre-apprentice training and eventual enrollment as apprentices to become carpenter or painter journeymen.

The training grant is a follow-up to a 1993 agreement between HUD, the Department of Labor and the unions. Since that agreement, other building trades unions also have become involved.

RESOURCES



'Stand UP' videos available

Two new videos have been produced by the Labor Institute of Public Affairs as part of the AFL-CIO campaign against congressional attacks on working families. **Stand UP For Working Families,** offering an overall view of the problem, is $10 per copy. (Catalog Code: LVBS-038). **Stand UP for a Real Voice on the Job** is a five-minute video that explains a new threat to worker rights under the so-called the "TEAM Act." Copies are $7.50 each. (Catalog Code: LVBS-037).

Contact LIPA Catalog, 815 16th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006. For information on bulk quantities of the video or customizing the program for your union, contact Jeanne Landymore for pricing and shipping details at 202-637-5359.



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

Former Labor Secretary W.J. Usery, flanked by Letter Carriers President Vincent R. Sombrotto and Postal Workers President Moe Biller, describes the situation on St. Patrick's Day 25 years ago when the postal unions struck. Usery was assistant secretary of labor during the Nixon administration, and Biller and Sombrotto were New York union officials. The situation for striking government workers was different under Ronald Reagan, who 11 years later fired striking air traffic controllers. The discussion was held at the National Postal Museum.

NEWSMAKERS

Carpenters President **Sigurd Lucassen** and UAW Secretary-Treasurer **Bill Casstevens** were elected to the board of directors of ULLICO Inc., the parent holding company for the Union Labor Life Insurance Co.

AWARDS

UAW President **Owen Bieber** and Chrysler Corp.'s **Roy Levy Williams** received the Human Rights Award from the Jewish Labor Committee. In presenting the award, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer **Thomas R. Donahue** cited Bieber's 47-year commitment to the union and Williams' service as acting director of the Michigan Department of Labor before becoming community relations manager for Chrysler.

AFSCME Local 1602 members **Dewey D. Frady Sr.** and **Dewey D. Frady Jr.,** a father and son from Wayne County, Mich., are credited with saving the life of a child whose neck had been caught in a noose. Responding to the screams next door, the two found a 13-year-old boy hanging from a tree. The child's face was blue and he was foaming at the mouth. The younger Frady released the boy while the elder Frady performed CPR. AFSCME's Michigan Council presented the two with a plaque.

Another AFSCME member, **Ken Davis** of Local 1427 in Maryland, was named one of the top 10 heroes of 1994 by the International Millennium Society. Davis, a corrections officer, tackled a man firing a gun at the White House last October.

DEATH

Matthew Guinan, retired president of the Transport Workers and a longtime member of the AFL-CIO Executive Council, died after a brief illness in New York. He was 84.

Guinan was the last of six union officers, including then-TWU President Michael Quill, who spent nine days in jail for refusing to call off the New York City transit strike in 1966.

As a trolley car operator, Guinan became active in the union in the 1930s. A pioneer in the organizing of TWU, Guinan became president of his local in 1951 and served five successive two-year terms.

Guinan was elected national secretary-treasurer in 1956 and became president of the union in 1966, following the death of Quill. He held that position until he retired in 1979.

Guinan is survived by his wife, three daughters and two sisters.

David Livingston, longtime District 65 president and a pioneer in the fight for civil rights, died from lymphoma in New York. He was 80.

Livingston became active in the labor movement as a pre-law student at Columbia University in the 1930s. He was working as a shipping clerk for a wholesale textile distributorship when the company's employees went on strike to organize a union.

Livingston took a leadership role in the struggle for a union and was president of what for several decades was District 65 of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union. It later became a unit of the UAW. Livingston is survived by his wife, two sons, a daughter, five grandchildren and one great-grandson.

Nat Zirkin, vice president and comptroller of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, died March 16. He was 84.

Zirkin served the union in a variety of roles for more than 56 years. He helped to write materials during the Macy and Bloomingdale's department stores organizing drives in the 1930s.

Zirkin is survived by his wife, two sons, several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

CORRECTIONS

An article March 20 misidentified the chairman of the AFL-CIO Pension Investment Committee. The panel is chaired by John T. Joyce, president of the Bricklayers.

In the March 20 Newsmakers column, John Jeffries was misidentified. He is Maryland's assistant secretary of labor.

Local 52 of the Laundry and Dry Cleaning Union was incorrectly identified Jan. 23 as an unaffiliated union.

— Compiled by Muriel H. Cooper

Haitian-American unionist honored

Georges Exceus, a U.S. labor representative in Haiti during that country's darkest hours, has been named to receive the American Red Cross 1995 International Humanitarian Service Award.

Exceus, director of the Port-au-Prince office of the AFL-CIO's American Institute for Free Labor Development, will be honored for "caring and concern, beyond professional call or duty," Red Cross President Elizabeth Dole said.

A Haitian-American, Exceus returned to his native land in 1991 and spent three years "supporting and defending his brothers and sisters who were the target of the military regime," AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland said in nominating Exceus.

At great personal risk, Exceus protected Haitians targeted by the brutal military dictators, organized donations of food, clothing and funds for the victims of the regime, and provided vital communication links to the outside world for embattled and imprisoned workers.

Exceus, a former Clothing and Textile organizer in Miami, will receive the award at the Red Cross national convention May 20-22 in Tulsa, Okla.



Gary E. Brown/Piping Industry News

More than 20,000 trade unionists gather in Indianapolis to protest attacks on workers.

Workers fight off state initiatives

Indiana prevailing wage battle boosted by rally

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

The concern and anger of workers facing the threat of wage rollbacks and attacks on their rights swelled up and rolled out in an impressive March 14 rally in Indianapolis.

The rally drew more than 20,000 workers from every corner of the state to defend the state's prevailing wage law and call attention to other state legislative initiatives to weaken child labor laws, cut back on workers' compensation and strip teachers' unions of the right to collect fair-share fees.

''It's time — high time — to take Indiana back from the corporate con artists who are out to take away prevailing wage with one hand while they crush teachers' unions with the other,'' United Mine Workers President Richard L. Trumka told the crowd.

The three-minute walk from the Indianapolis Convention Center to the state Capitol took five times as long because of the massive crowd. Justin Walsh, the state archivist, said he wasn't aware of any state political gathering as large as this one. Changes in the prevailing wage law have passed the Indiana House and are under consideration by the state Senate.

Indiana is only one of many states struggling to protect workers in the wake of the 1994 elections that gave Republicans their biggest state legislative victories in 28 years. Idaho has a new law extending ''right to work'' to public employees, and right-to-work initiatives still simmer in California, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, New Mexico and Oregon.

In addition to right-to-work attacks on unions, assaults on prevailing wage laws and workers' compensation, such issues as privatization and prison labor confront workers in other states.

In a powerful message that applies to all those states, Trumka reminded Indiana unionists that ''the only time working people win is when we join together. That's how we're going to protect prevailing wage. That's how we're going to protect fair share. That's what it's going to take to save workers' compensation and unemployment insurance and child labor laws.''

Taking aim at the Republican-controlled General Assembly, Indiana AFL-CIO President Chuck Deppert said, ''When you take on one of us you take on all of us. The power of union solidarity will be thoroughly felt today, tomorrow and in the 1996 election.''

The trade unionists also unveiled a ''Contract with Indiana'' that calls for support of programs to help workers and their families.

Right-to-work inroads

So far this year, most efforts to enact right-to-work laws have failed. Bills have either died in committee or in one of the legislative bodies since the beginning of the year in Montana, New Hampshire, Maryland and Colorado.

But in Idaho, where right-to-work legislation was passed in 1986 for the private sector, Republican Gov. Phil Batt signed a bill March 16 that extends the law to public employees.

''Idaho public employees who have no collective bargaining rights now have no union security clause,'' said Randall Ambeuhl, president of the Idaho AFL-CIO. He said the new law would wipe out the union security clauses in the contracts of ''some Fire Fighters and Service Employees'' who had such contracts.

In Pennsylvania, the Senate passed three measures to repeal agency fair-share fees for local government employees, state employees and school teachers. Like the Senate, the House is controlled by Republicans, but the outlook is better there, says Pennsylvania AFL-CIO President William George.

''This legislation denies public employees the fundamental right to negotiate the principle that all who benefit from the collective bargaining agreement — union wage scale, benefits and grievance procedure — pay their fair share of the costs,'' he explained.

In California, a state that has assumed a moderate-to-conservative posture in the past few years, two right-to-work bills have been introduced in the House. One bill targets school employees and another covers all workers.

Right-to-work measures in Oklahoma and New Mexico were tabled in committee but proponents are maneuvering politically to get around the state legislatures. Oklahoma's Republican governor, Frank Keating, supported a House floor amendment allowing for a October 1995 vote on the issue. The amendment passed by a 73-23 vote.

New Mexico's right-to-work legislation was referred to three Senate committees, two of which tabled the measure. But proponents tried to remove it from the third committee, Judiciary and Finance, but the motion was defeated 25-17.

In Oregon, the quest for signatures to get right to work for public employees on the ballot in 1996 is going on while legislation to the same effect is pending in the House and Senate. Proponents have until July 1996 to obtain the needed signatures.

Right-to-work is in the talking stage in Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Ohio and Wisconsin.

Meanwhile, Republican lawmakers in Congress have introduced legislation calling for a national right-to-work law. Sen. Lauch Faircloth of North Carolina introduced S. 581, the National Labor Relations Act Amendment and Rep. Robert Goodlatte of Virginia introduced H.R. 1279, the National Right to Work Act.

''No hearings have been scheduled in either the House or the Senate,'' said AFL-CIO legislative representative Maria Fiordellisi. ''It's just not possible to tell what they have in mind other than getting credit for introducing a national right-to-work law.''

Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole and Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich are long-time supporters of right to work. Dole in particular has been aligned with the effort since the 1950s, when National Right to Work Committee President Reed Larson led the campaign for Kansas' right-to-work law. The law was enacted in 1958 while Dole was a Russell County attorney.

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AFL-CIO NEWS

VOLUME 40, NUMBER 8

APRIL 17, 1995

Urgent task: Workers Memorial Day

By Colleen M. O'Neill

A sense of urgency is pushing workers to Stand UP this April 28, Workers Memorial Day, in the fight for safe jobs.

Bells will chime, work will cease, candles will burn and activists will march in traditional fashion for the 7th annual observance. Special regional events also are planned for Boston, Los Angeles, New York City and Greensboro, N.C.

But the event created by the AFL-CIO to mourn fallen workers and rally Americans for better protections on the job has an even more important focus this year, as the new Republican majority in Congress runs roughshod over current safety and health regulations, said Peg Seminario, the federation's safety and health director.

"Employers opposed to job safety and health regulation have gained new friends on Capitol Hill," she said. "They have introduced measures that would cripple OSHA's enforcement and inspection powers, take away millions of dollars in current and future funding and simply gut the agency. We need to send a message to Congress that this is NOT what we voted for in November."

Specifically, legislation is pending that would:

- Create exemptions from inspections for some employers.
- Halt all new regulation or, alternatively, offer Congress a permanent window to kill some safety and health standards outright.
- Reduce the maximum penalty for employers to $7,000.
- Allow employers to create and dominate safety and health committees by circumventing Section 8(a)(2) of the National Labor Relations Act.

The Republican attack on safety and health laws stands in stark contrast to the promise of the 1970 Occupational Safety and Health Act, which was signed by a Republican president. Since then, more than 140,000 workers' lives have been saved and countless injuries and illnesses have been avoided

Continued on Page 5



Vicki Valerio/The Philadelphia Inquirer

Harry Lombardo, president of Transport Workers Local 234, leads a chant during a rally in Kensington, Pa., near Philadelphia. He was joined by TWU President Sonny Hall, right, and Philadelphia AFL-CIO President Joseph Rauscher. Some 5,800 TWU members ended a two-week strike and returned to work April 11 after reaching a tentative three-year agreement with the five-county Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority. The workers were set to vote on the pact April 17.

'Scabs destroy middle-class life'

By James B. Parks

The use of permanent strikebreakers devastates the lives of working middle-class families whose only desire is to maintain the standard of living they strived so hard to achieve, a striking worker told Congress.

"We are the middle-class families you hear so much about," Roger Gates told the House Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee. "We live in communities like yours; we pay our taxes and we live by the rules."

Gates, president of Rubber Workers Local 713 in Decatur, Ill., was the only worker representative allowed to testify on a bill to overturn President Clinton's executive order barring federal contracts to companies that use permanent replacements for strikers. The bill, H.R. 1176, was introduced by committee chairman Rep. William Goodling (R-Pa.) and is part of the Republican Congress' efforts to eliminate safeguards and protections for workers.

The Clinton administration is fighting efforts to kill the order in Congress and in the courts. The Justice Department has asked a federal court to dismiss a suit by business organizations and Bridgestone/Firestone that would nullify the order. The suit is a sham, the administration said, and the business community cannot transform the matter into a constitutional issue by raising the mantra of separation of powers.

Approximately 4,200 URW members are on strike nationwide against Bridgestone/Firestone in what has become the longest strike on record for the union, surpassing a 141-day strike in 1976.

They were "permanently replaced" in January.

At the witness table, Gates was literally surrounded by "suits," representatives of big business from the Chamber of Commerce, National Association of Manufacturers, Labor Policy Association, Steptoe & Johnson legal firm and the National Right to Work Committee. But, speaking from his heart and experience, he added an essential human element to the hearing.

The impact of replacements are felt in a reduced quality of life and poor quality of products, Gates said. "I'm not a lawyer or a lobbyist," he said. "But I do

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Recess: Time to make noise in the districts

Stand UP campaign targets GOP agenda

By Mike Hall

Organized labor is a major part of the critical audience facing House Republicans home for Easter recess flush from the first 100 days of the so-called "Contract with America."

To dramatize the failings of this legislative assault on workers, the AFL-CIO has stepped up its grassroots campaign, "Stand UP for America's Working Families," for the three-week recess. The GOP contract is proving to be a thinly veiled effort to dismantle core labor laws and worker protections.

The Stand UP campaign combines meetings with lawmakers, rallies, demonstrations, union education programs, public awareness projects and television and print advertisements.

"We can defeat their anti-worker, anti-family, anti-union agenda — but only if we educate and mobilize our members and allies, and only if we keep their attention focused on the question that really matters: Does this agenda help or hurt the average American worker," AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland explained.

The adverse impact of the GOP program — job loss, lower wages, fewer rights and less job safety — will hit non-union workers as well as union members, said Tom Owens, who coordinates the activity of the federation's Legislative Action Committees. "The more working people across the country realize this, the more motivated they will be," he said.

Some 50 LAC meetings with Democratic and Republican House members have been scheduled and another 50 requests are pending. The meetings with representatives who have shown their support for labor in the past are designed to encourage them to continue to support issues of concern to working families.

However, many of the LAC meetings will be with House members whose support has been marginal, or who have even been hostile to working people's concerns.

"We want to give those lawmakers, Republican and Democrat, an opportunity to hear and see the prob-

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POINT OF VIEW

Owners strike out with hardball tactics

Solidarity settled the baseball strike. The baseball owners clearly counted on the players folding and returning one by one to 1995 spring training. Not one player did.

Like other U.S. employers, the owners started by issuing a "take it or leave it" proclamation — a tactic once known as Boulwarism, named for a GE official who discovered during a 1969 strike that the weapon is useless against solidarity.

Second, the owners stuck to their edict that the game would have a salary cap and the players would have no voice on the issue, making a sham of bargaining. That, too, is a familiar tactic, from the Phelps-Dodge copper strike of a dozen years ago to today's disputes at Frontier Hotel, Caterpillar, Diamond Walnut and Bridgestone/Firestone.

Third, the owners raised the "replacement" scare designed to bust the union and make the players do what they're told. In that, they drew on the experience of the darkest hour in sports bargaining, the willingness of professional football owners in 1987 to desecrate their product with scabs.

Except the replacement scare didn't work. A few baseball players mouthed off, but none went to spring training. By and large, sports reporters weren't swallowing the owners' line that the salary cap was inspired by concern for the "small market" teams. No one had seen that concern expressed by owners of the New York or Los Angeles teams writing a check to the Minnesota owner.

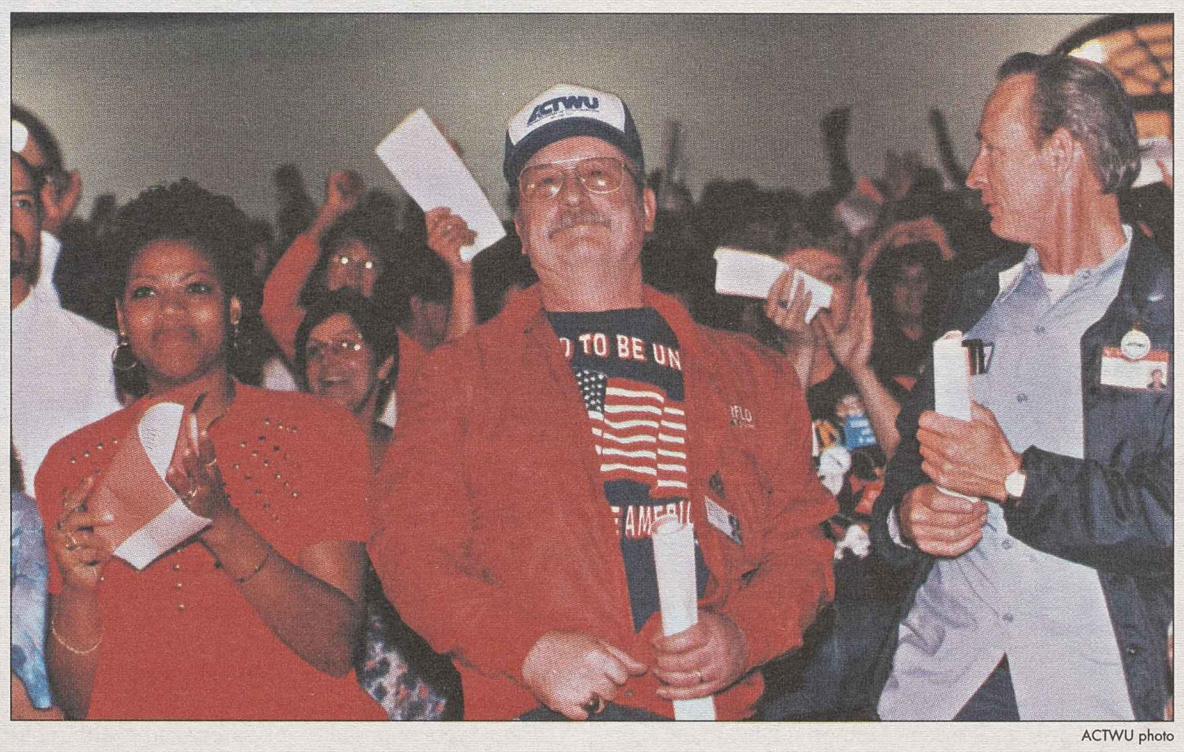
And the reporters didn't accept scab games this time, partially because baseball was blessed by two honest men: Baltimore owner Peter Angelos and Detroit manager Sparky Anderson. They refused to be involved with scab games, even in the exhibition season. Their integrity focused a floodlight on the other owners, who are so accustomed to having their own way that they simply fired the last commissioner who said they should bargain with their workers.

Other industries have employers with integrity — and some U.S. workplaces are a model of labor-management cooperation. But an employer who breaks ranks the way Angelos did will be the first.

Finally, federal labor law didn't just work, it actually worked in timely fashion. The National Labor Relations Board often finds unfair labor practices by employers, but that usually comes later enough that it does the workers little if any good — perhaps back pay for a worker who now lives in another state, minus any wages earned in the intervening years.

Not this time. This general counsel and this board did the right thing — by a vote of 3-2. The National Football League owners also violated the law in 1987, the NLRB found. But that finding came in 1988 and owners' spokesman Tex Schramm asked reporters, "Who cares? The penalty under the NLRB is 'don't do it again.' "

NLRB members and bargaining strategies will change. But the need for solidarity will remain the same. Workers can't win without it, even if they can hit a big league curve ball.



ACTWU photo

Workers applaud ratification of their first union contract at Tultex in Martinsville, Va. The Clothing and Textile Workers' victory at the plant was the largest NLRB election victory in the textile industry since J.P. Stevens in the mid-1970s. Workers had voted in ACTWU seven months earlier by nearly 2 to 1.

Benefits aid federal organizing

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

Union organizers in the federal sector are finding that Union Privilege benefit programs are an especially potent addition to the equation of what the union can do for employees.

The availability of low-interest credit cards, mortgage and real estate assistance, a dental plan, a motor club, life insurance, accident insurance, mail prescription plan, toll-free telephone discount shopping and legal services has helped organize thousands of federal employees.

In fact, Union Privilege programs are the most effective component of organizing campaigns, Government Employees President John N. Sturdivant said. The union uses "lunch-and-learn" sessions to explain to both members and non-members about the union and the benefits of membership.

The benefits are particularly useful in organizing federal employees, since about 80 percent are covered by some kind of union contract but only 30 percent are dues-paying members. Thus, the benefits can be an added incentive for workers to join, unions say.

The Professional and Technical Employees recently won three elections, totaling some 525 workers, with Union Privilege programs providing a major impetus. The elections were won by Local 86 at the San Francisco Army Corps, Local 99 at the Army Corps of Engineers in Chicago and Local 42 at the Bureau of Mines in Salt Lake City.

"I think all of the (Union Privilege) programs are great," said Wally Moser, acting vice president of IFPTE Local 86. "The main thing was being represented, but some people will join just to have the benefits of Union Privilege."

IFPTE's first contact is a letter explaining what the union does, along with a Union Privilege flier and union authorization card, said William Schofield, IFPTE international representative. The Union Privilege MasterCard goes over tremendously well, he said.

Jill Hastings, an AFGE representative, credits the programs for gaining 300 new members in nine locals in eight months. "They get us in the door. The benefits definitely sell and substantiate the value of unionism."

The benefits provide an opener in recruiting new members, said Barbara Sanders, administrative assistant for AFGE District 9. "We can't talk about arbitration and negotiated contracts with non-members because then we're asking them to run before they can walk. We show them how they can save money with Union Privilege programs, more than their union dues."

At government installations in Oklahoma City, "union benefits are the only thing union members have that free riders don't," said AFGE Local 2562 President Connie Birth. "Some people will join just for the benefits they get through AFGE and Union Privilege."

"Now just about the only people leaving the union are the ones who are leaving government service," she said.

Poll shows benefits being spread around

In a recent Union Privilege poll of 996 local union leaders, more than 65 percent reported that union members have had a positive reaction to the benefits. Thirty-seven percent credited the benefits with organizing new members.

The survey found a number of ways in which the benefits are being publicized by unions.

While more than 45 percent of the leaders used local union newsletters to publicize the benefits, almost 73 percent relied on bulletin boards and 70 percent distributed information at union meetings.

Nearly 68 percent provided materials at a member's request and 53 percent distributed at the worksite.

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Director of Information: Rex Hardesty

Editor: Michael Byrne

Assistant Editors: Candice Johnson, David Kameras, James B. Parks

Staff Writers: Muriel H. Cooper, Mike Hall Colleen M. O'Neill, Sharolyn A. Rosier

Graphics/Layout: Stan Hitt, Hindi M. Fracasse

AFL-CIO Headquarters: 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006
Telephone: (202) 637-5010
CompuServe: 76004, 3601

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Marianne Keffer Zweig/Page One Photography

URW Local 713 President Roger Gates is surrounded by business lobbyists as he testifies against scabs.

Clinton fights for ban on scab contracts

Continued from Page 1

have almost 30 years of experience building tires. And on that basis I can tell you that I would not want my family — or anyone else I care about or am responsible for — riding on tires made by inexperienced workers."

The members struck, Gates said, because the company demanded a contract requiring a 12-hour day, a loss of holidays and a worker contribution of $2,800 for medical costs. He said workers had not had a paycheck since last July, had no health insurance since October and their strike fund went broke in January 1995. The company, however, continues to operate at a profit, he said.

The workers were taken by surprise when they learned from the Decatur newspaper on Jan. 5 that they had been "permanently replaced." He said he called the company and offered to have the members return to work so that they would not lose their jobs. But the company refused.

The company can get away with this because "the law gives it the whip hand," he said. "We went on strike reluctantly, knowing that by forgoing our paychecks we and our families would suffer — and we have. Families have broken up. Homes are being lost. Spouses and children are going without adequate medical treatment. And now we are told that because we would not give in — because we exercised our so-called 'right' to strike — we no longer have jobs. Many of us may never work again."

Rep. William L. Clay (D-Mo.), who introduced the Workplace Fairness Bill in the last Congress, told the committee the use of permanent replacements undermines cooperative and stable labor-management relations and makes strikes "more prolonged and contentious than other strikes."

> *"The law gives (the company) the whip hand. We went on strike reluctantly. . . . And now we are told that because we would not give in, we no longer have jobs. Many of us may never work again."*
>
> **— Roger Gates, URW Local 713 president**

"The decade of the 1980s was littered with the destruction caused by the use of permanent replacement workers," he said. "Greyhound, International Paper, Continental Airlines and Eastern Airlines are examples of that destruction."

The biggest tragedy of the strike, however, may be the lessons it teaches the country, Gates said. That is, "whatever employers want is what they will get, and we working people have no way to save our current wages and working conditions, much less to improve them, if — as will always be true — someone else is willing to work for less."

"To my way of thinking, that is not the way it is supposed to be in the United States of America."

Workers mobilize, send recess message

Continued from Page 1

lems working people have with the direction Congress has taken, let them know that these union folks are part of their constituency, too, and they vote," Owens said.

"On the other hand, we want to expose union members to a lawmaker's record and beliefs . . . sort of a 'there you have it, this guy votes with us 14 percent of the time and he backs company unions and permanent replacements. There's no reason he should get any union support.' "

Union members in key congressional districts also will attend town meetings and other public forums scheduled by their representatives. They are being encouraged to take the Stand UP campaign's call for "Good Jobs, Good Wages, Health and Safety and A Real Voice on the Job" to those meetings.

Fliers and other materials have been tailored for use in 129 congressional districts highlighting members' votes on Social Security, workplace safety issues, tax cuts for the wealthy and big business. The fliers also carry the special AFL-CIO toll-free congressional hotline number, 1-800/972-3524. They encourage union members to call their representative and urge them, specifically:

- To maintain the Davis-Bacon and Service Contract Acts.
- To vote against efforts to gut the Fair Labor Standards Act.
- To oppose the so-called TEAM Act, which opens the door for the creation of company unions.
- To support an increase in the minimum wage.
- To actively support President Clinton's executive order banning the use of permanent replacement workers by federal contractors.

These fliers and other information will be distributed at plant gates, job sites and union meetings during the April recess.

Workers Memorial Day, which occurs during the recess, offers trade unionists another vehicle to reach members of Congress. (**See story, Page 1.**) About two dozen House and Senate members will receive special attention that day, April 28, through activities in their districts and states.

Two special direct mail campaigns aimed at union members in districts represented by Harris Fawell (R-Ill.) and Cass Ballenger (R-N.C.) also are under way. Television and newspaper ads, which began in the Washington area (and in the national edition of USA TODAY) during the week before the recess, are set for nine other congressional districts.

The 30-second TV ads highlight the GOP attack on wages, health and safety, housing for senior citizens and school lunch programs.

Union officials and members across the country are being encouraged to contribute in other ways, such as writing letters to the editor and op-ed pieces, and participating in radio call-in shows.

Tax-break bill 'jewel' for rich, slap to workers

By Mike Hall

The House approved the "crowning jewel" in the GOP's so-called Contract with America — a huge tax break to the supposedly "overtaxed" wealthy that ignores the concerns of working families.

The bill, passed April 5 by a 246-188 margin, combines about $189 billion in tax breaks with a similar amount of spending cuts. The cuts eliminate many programs that currently provide vital services or benefits for middle- and lower-income Americans.

Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) labeled the bill his "crowning jewel" in a Wall Street Journal column, in which he also claimed to be helping "overtaxed" wealthy Americans.

Vice President Gore called the Republican tax giveaway "a royal ripoff. . . . It's Robin Hood in reverse . . . take from all the programs that actually help hard-working, middle-income American families and give it to the wealthiest in the country."

"This bill should not be mistaken for, nor mislabeled as, a family-friendly measure," AFL-CIO Legislative Director Peggy Taylor said in a letter to the House.

Most of the bill's $189 billion in tax breaks would go to people making more than $100,000. "Most two-earner families, let alone the vast majority of individual taxpayers, do not approach that level of income," Taylor said.

A Treasury Department study shows that a family making between $30,000 and $50,000 a year would receive $569 in tax relief under the bill. A family with an income of more than $200,000, on the other hand, could see more than $11,000 in tax breaks.

When individual and business tax cuts are considered together, businesses and the top 12 percent of the wealthiest taxpayers would get more than half the total tax breaks.

GOP leaders tried to paint this giveaway as a working families' tax cut and a measure that would benefit children. But while the bill would give the child care tax credit to families making more than $200,000, millions of low-income families would receive little, and in some cases literally nothing, according to a Democratic Study Group report on the bill.

Because the tax credit is not refundable, families that do not earn enough money to pay federal taxes would receive no tax credit. For example, a family with two children earning $16,950 a year would receive nothing. A family with two children earning $23,615 would receive only a partial credit.

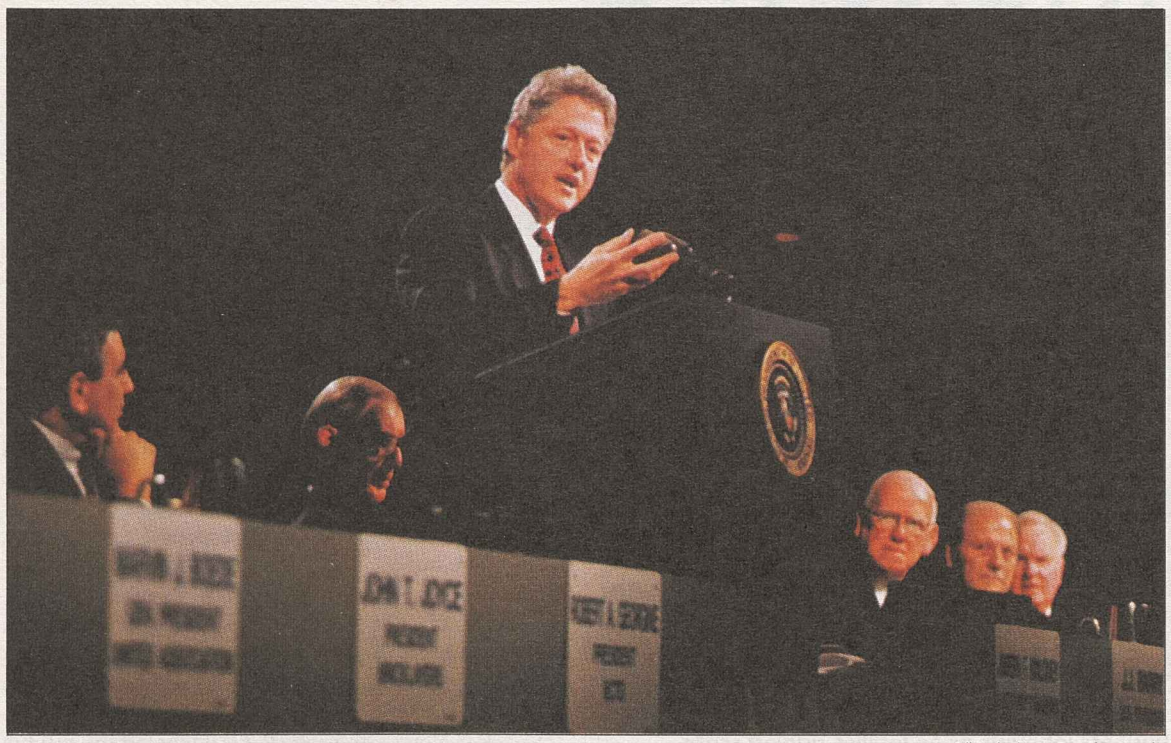
The bill also eliminates the alternative minimum corporate tax, which was designed to assure that companies pay at least some tax on their profits. It was enacted after many firms began using a variety of tax breaks and loopholes to avoid paying taxes at all, even though they were reaping profits.

GOP leaders plan to pay for the tax cuts in part by cutting the Civil Service Retirement System for federal employees, who would see their benefits reduced while their retirement premiums would be increased. Significant cuts would be made in the welfare system and in nutrition programs, according to the Congressional Budget Office. Medicare costs also would be boosted for millions of older Americans.

The bulk of the cuts — another $100 billion — would come from discretionary spending. These additional cuts, according to a detailed outline from the GOP-controlled House Budget Committee, are again disproportionately aimed at working families.

The additional cuts would come from repealing the Davis-Bacon Act and reducing the Service Contract Act's prevailing wage protections. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration would be cut further, and many job training programs, including those aimed at displaced workers such as the Trade Adjustment Assistance and NAFTA Adjustment Assistance, would be cut.

The Federal Maritime Commission and all ship-operating and shipbuilding subsidies would end, placing thousands of American seafaring jobs in jeopardy.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

President Clinton tells BCTD legislative conference he would veto any bill that threatens the Davis-Bacon Act.

BCTD spurs Davis-Bacon defense

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

Building trades unionists massed on Capitol Hill to rally support for the Davis-Bacon Act and cheered President Clinton as he assured them he would veto any legislation that undermines the nation's prevailing wage law.

Delegates to the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department legislative conference also heard from several congressional allies, including Sens. Paul Wellstone (D-Minn.) and Tom Harkin (D-Iowa), who said they would mount a filibuster should the legislation reach the Senate floor.

Although the drive to repeal Davis-Bacon is led by the new Republican leaders in Congress, at least two Republican House members, Reps. Jack Quinn of New York and Don Young of Alaska, told the rally they will join with most Democrats in opposing repeal.

"We need to make this economy more competitive," Clinton told the 3,000 conference delegates in explaining his support for Davis-Bacon. "We don't need a low-wage strategy."

The president also reiterated his support for an increase in the minimum wage and occupational safety and health reform, and paid special tribute to the building trades tradition of joint labor-management apprenticeship training.

There is "no future" in pitting management against labor, he said. "What works in our own lives is when we are well educated, well trained and work hard together."

The Clinton administration "is committed to working Americans, to lifting their wages, to giving them better living standards to make their lives better," Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich told the delegates.

Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) enumerated the many problems facing the country and wondered, "What is it about Republicans that they wanted to make the first order of business in the Labor Committee the repeal of the Davis-Bacon Act?"

In the nine states that have repealed prevailing wage laws — the most since the onset of the Reagan administration — three times the number of work-related accidents in construction and three times the number of cost overruns have occurred, Kennedy said.

BCTD President Robert A. Georgine noted that Republican legislators have "started to feel the strength of our resistance. What seemed eminently doable to Republicans in December has become increasingly formidable in April."

Georgine pointed to a building trades demonstration and walkout of Democratic members of the House Economic and Educational Opportunities subcommittee on work force standards during the markup of legislation to repeal the Davis-Bacon Act.

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland assured delegates that their fight for Davis-Bacon is a fight for all of labor. "That's what solidarity is all about. . . . We're going to need a lot of solidarity in the coming weeks and months if we're to have any chance of defeating these Republican attacks on working people and the programs that help them."

But the threat to American workers does not end at the Capital Beltway, Kirkland declared. "It extends to the state capitals across the country where new conservative majorities are advancing right-to-work and other anti-union proposals."

The delegates also participated in several workshops, including organizing, public project agreements, workers' compensation through collective bargaining and pensions.

Other speakers included Senate Minority Leader Thomas A. Daschle (D-S.D.) and House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.), as well as Sen. Arlen Specter (R-Pa.); Denver Mayor Wellington Webb; Washington Mayor Marion Barry; Ray Marshall, former secretary of labor; Myrlie Evers-Williams, national chair of the NAACP; H. Carl McCall, New York state controller; Bernard E. Anderson, assistant secretary of the Department of Labor Employment Standards Administration; and Michael D'Antuono, president of Parson Constructors Inc.

Borg-Warner ousts anti-worker CEO

The Teamsters, engaged in an intensive corporate campaign against Borg-Warner, hailed the company's announcement that it had replaced Donald C. Trauscht, the chairman and chief executive officer.

"This company's pitiful performance is rooted in its mismanagement of its major asset — the workers," said IBT President Ron Carey. "We hope this shakeup means the company will build a real partnership with shareholders, employees and customers."

The Teamsters led a proxy fight to establish an independent director as chairman. The union tied Borg-Warner's declining value and eroding customer base to its mishandling of its employees.

"We applaud the shareholders — including the major stockholder Merrill Lynch — for moving to protect the value of the company," said Bill Patterson, the IBT's corporate affairs director. Merrill Lynch, through its affiliates, owns 46 percent of Borg-Warner stock.

"The stockholders have signaled the company that it's time for reform," Patterson said. "Borg-Warner can no longer ignore the connection between the mismanagement of its employees and the devastating stock drops we have seen over the last quarter."

The company announced that J. Joe Adorjan, former president of Emerson Electric, would become chairman after a transition period.

Borg-Warner is the parent of Pony Express, where the IBT has an ongoing campaign for a first contract. Some 4,000 drivers at 37 locations nationwide voted in the IBT. But the company has dragged its feet on negotiating a first contract. Intermittent talks are continuing, although Pony Express has designated only two persons to negotiate separate contracts for each of the 37 locations, the union said.

Meanwhile, Carey said, the drivers work for less than $5 an hour in dangerous conditions. The AFL-CIO, through its Strategic Approaches Committee, has provided assistance to the IBT in its campaign.

CWA settles in for long-term fight to alter Congress

Communications Workers are prepared for "a long struggle to win back the hearts and minds of the American people," the union's legislative conference was told.

Even union members, many of whom voted for Republicans in 1994, must be shown that the GOP's so-called Contract with America hurts workers, CWA President Morton Bahr said. "We couldn't have a clearer picture of who are our friends and who are not," he said.

"The right wing has connected with the pain felt by the middle class as a result of stagnating wages, two-wage earners working longer hours to make ends meet and the insecurity that most workers feel today.

"They have convinced workers that their problems are caused by welfare mothers and immigrants," Bahr said, but "the truth is that if you threw all of the welfare recipients into the street, cut off aid to teenage mothers, put their kids in orphanages and barred all immigration, it would not raise the wage of a single worker or alleviate his fear over losing his job."

Bahr praised President Clinton for issuing an executive order banning federal contracts to companies that use permanent replacements for striking workers. The order, he said, gives the union a stronger bargaining position in negotiations with AT&T.

CWA Secretary-Treasurer Barbara J. Easterling, who heads the union's legislative committee, said the policies of the new Republican majority in Congress are the "biggest rip-off of working families since the days of the robber barons."

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue issued a strong warning about the so-called TEAM Act, calling it "a calculated attempt to end the trade union movement as we know it, to end the idea of workers as equals of managers, to end the idea of collective bargaining."

Donahue urged CWA to join in at all levels in the federation's "Stand UP" campaign, which he called "the most aggressive grass-roots campaign to change Congress that the trade union movement has ever mounted. And it's never been more necessary than it is now."

Other speakers included House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.), Federal Communications Commission Chair Reed Hundt, Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala, Democratic National Committee Chairman Donald Fowler, Vermont Gov. Howard Dean, Ladies' Garment Workers Vice President Evelyn DuBrow, Sen. John B. Breaux (D-La.) and Reps. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.), Jose Serrano (D-N.Y.), Thomas J. Bliley (R-Va.), John Lewis (D-Ga.), Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio) and David R. Obey (D-Wis.).

Good jobs give way to lure of low wages

The search is still on for those high-tech job opportunities that were supposed to come our way in the wake of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

According to the American Electronics Association, technology employment is making a "comeback," as the electronics industry added 111,000 new jobs in 1994.

Tell that to the workers at Polk Audio in Baltimore.

The manufacturer of high-quality loudspeakers is in the process of shifting most of its remaining production to Tijuana, Mexico.

The reason? "In Baltimore, we pay people American-type wages, and in Mexico we pay them Mexican wages," said George M. Klopfer, president and chief operating officer of the company.

As a result, 34 American workers earning $14 an hour in wages and benefits are losing their jobs, while Mexican workers will be exploited at less than $2 an hour. About 10 jobs will remain for a production work force that once numbered 140.

Not that decent wages have exactly hurt the company. Polk is showing its shareholders record profits, with net income for the nine months ending Dec. 25 up 93.9 percent from a year earlier, and sales up 24.8 percent.

Apparently no good deed goes unpunished. "We've certainly for many years enjoyed very good labor relations," Klopfer said.

School-to-work program flunking initial phase

By Muriel H. Cooper

President Clinton's promising school-to-work program, a cornerstone of his Goals 2000 initiative, is off on the wrong foot, AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland said in a letter to Education Secretary Richard W. Riley.

The selection criteria for state grants leave unions out of the equation entirely, despite specific provisions for a labor role in the School-to-Work Opportunities Act, Kirkland said.

Goals 2000 calls on resources from the labor, education and business communities to establish skill and performance standards for students. The school-to-work leg of the program is aimed at preparing youth who are not college-bound to successfully compete in a global, highly skilled job market.

The AFL-CIO strongly supported passage of the legislation in 1993, hoping to build on the union apprenticeship and other training and education programs that have increased academic and work-based opportunities for the nation's young people for more than a century.

"The law mandates union participation at the local level, but this underscores the importance of a federal directive requiring states to show how they intend to meet this requirement for involvement," said Kirkland.

"The failure to include an explicit role for unions in these programs sends a negative message to the states and implies that organized labor need not be consulted in the design and operation of these vitally important programs."

Unions should explicitly and consistently be mentioned and recognized as partners who are able to ensure students' successful preparation for the working world, Kirkland added.

A report prepared by the AFL-CIO Education Department showed a variety of ways that labor can enhance state school-to-work learning systems, including:

Access to signatory employers. Unions have access to corporate decision-makers in industries that typically offer higher-skilled, higher-wage jobs than do non-union workplaces.

Mentoring youth. Experienced workers can share real-life experiences based on realities and rewards of the workplace.

Building systems that serve all youth. Unions serve a diverse work force, reflecting a changing nation. This experience can be incorporated to help serve young people of diverse ethnic and economic backgrounds.

Some local communities have developed these programs. The San Diego AFL-CIO, for example, gives young math and science students hands-on projects at local apprenticeship training centers.

In Genesee County, Mich., the Teamsters, UAW, Building Trades Council, Flint AFL-CIO and the Michigan Education Association recently signed an agreement that pledged to better train students for their future careers.

"This commitment guarantees we will provide every resource at our disposal to help build a world-class work force that will provide a bright future for our entire community," said Jack Krueger, UAW Region 1-C training coordinator.

Workers have voice on skill standards board

Five labor representatives have been named to the National Skill Standards Board, created last year as a part of the Clinton administration's Goals 2000: Educate America Act.

The panel, which held its first meeting April 7, will coordinate the use of voluntary skill standards by labor, human resource professionals, educators and business for students, workers and employers. It also will ensure compatibility of standards across industry lines, develop quality assurance criteria and may endorse standards.

Education Secretary Richard W. Riley said the board "will serve as a catalyst for education reform as we promote new ways of learning and provide our students with the broad occupational knowledge, skill and flexibility to respond to emerging work force needs."

Members include Katherine Schrier, AFSCME District Council 37; John T. Smith, special assistant to Steelworkers President George Becker; AFT Vice President Paul F. Cole; Kenneth Edwards, Electrical Workers technical service director; George Bliss, training director for the Plumbers and Pipe Fitters; and Yvette Herrera, assistant to Communications Workers President Morton Bahr.

The board elected James R. Houghton, president of Corning Inc., as its chairman.

Rallies focus on job safety threat

Continued from Page 1

because of OSHA's power to make and enforce rules governing on-the-job safety and health.

With OSHA, the government was responding to workers' demands, as reflected in the refrain of the popular song, "We just come to work here, we don't come to die." Progress for workplace safety and health has been due, in large measure, to trade union activism.

The Ladies' Garment Workers recently marked the 84th anniversary of what many consider to be a watershed event in the fight for better workplace safety and health laws.

It was March 25, 1911, when 146 young women and girls were trapped and died while trying to escape the raging inferno of the Triangle Shirtwaist Co. in New York City. The exits had been locked by the employer to keep the workers from stepping out from the sweatshop for a breath of fresh air.

Although the fire spurred a nationwide movement for improved working conditions, unscrupulous employers are blatantly disregarding "the many laws enacted since 1911 to protect the safety, well-being and rights of working people," said ILGWU President Jay Mazur.

"We can honor the sacrifice of the Triangle workers best by rededicating ourselves to the continuing struggle against both the new sweatshops at home and the exploitation of workers by greedy employers throughout the world," he said.

While 10,000 workers still lose their lives each year, that number would climb much higher without strong laws and strong efforts by labor and management to see that basic safety practices are the norm and not the exception, Seminario said.

"It's the Fight of Our Lives," the campaign poster and other print material remind us as trade unionists take the Stand UP campaign into communities across the country.

Major rallies and hearings are being planned, with Boston leading the way; New York City, with Rep. Major R. Owens (D-N.Y.) chairing the hearing; Los Angeles, with many members of the California delegation in attendance; and Greensboro, N.C., with Rep. Mel Watt (D-N.C.) helping to put the pressure on fellow lawmakers to support a strong federal job safety program.

AFL-CIO activists in the field are working on sending a special message to key lawmakers on the appropriations and labor committees home for the congressional Easter recess — the message that safe jobs are a right and that a strong OSHA with real powers is the way to deliver on that right and the 25-year-old commitment.



Among those key congressional districts are: Arkansas 4th, Rep. Jay Dickey (R); California 1st, Rep. Frank Riggs (R); California 3rd, Rep. Vic Fazio (D); Florida 10th, Rep. C.W. Bill Young (R); Georgia 10th, Rep. Charles Norwood (R); Illinois 10th, Rep. John E. Porter (R); Louisiana 1st, Rep. Robert Livingston (R); Michigan 9th, Rep. Dale E. Kildee (D); Mississippi 1st, Rep. Roger Wicker (R); New York 1st, Rep. Michael Forbes (R); Ohio 14th, Rep. Thomas C. Sawyer (D); Oklahoma 5th, Rep. Ernest J. Istook (R); Oregon 5th, Rep. Jim Bunn (R); and Washington 5th, Rep. George Nethercutt (R).

Key senators include Republicans Robert J. Dole and Nancy L. Kassebaum of Kansas, Judd Gregg of New Hampshire, John Ashcroft of Missouri, Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania, William Frist of Tennessee and Jim M. Jeffords of Vermont.

Among the many events planned this year are the April 30 dinner and program by trade unionists in San Jose, Calif., with the theme "Safe Jobs, Healthy Families" carried out in music and worker stories. Communications Workers will sponsor a petition-signing at 20 locations throughout Jacksonville, Fla., while workers in Alton and Danville, Ill., will have memorial services.

Workers in Clinton, Iowa, will be observing a moment of silence at noon on the 28th, while others will gather at the American Labor Museum/Botto House National Landmark in New Jersey for a candlelight vigil and reading of workers' names. Oregon trade unionists will rally and lobby state legislators on that day.

To report on events in your community, or for more information, contact Keith Mestrich at 202/637-5210.

JOB SAFETY

Bayou Steel slapped

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has cited the Bayou Steel Corp. for 75 serious safety and health violations at its LaPlace, La., plant.

The company faces more than $160,000 in fines for the offenses, which could have caused grievous injury or death. Among the violations found were conditions that could have contaminated the atmosphere with lead, cadmium and radioactive material.

The federal job safety agency was called in to the plant by striking members of Steelworkers Local 9121, who have been out since March 1993 and permanently replaced. OSHA inspectors first attempted to inspect the plant last June, but the company refused to allow them inside.

Cancer risk from gasoline

The Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers presented evidence recently that a popular gasoline additive causes cancer and other health problems.

At a daylong conference in Washington, scientists and researchers noted studies showing that MTBE causes leukemia, lymphomas and testicular cancers in laboratory animals, while the majority of oil refinery workers who mixed MTBE with gasoline complained of suffering from nerve problems, breathing problems, headaches and nausea.

Some 7,000 OCAW members produce the additive — added to gasoline to help clean the air — and 35,000 members work in gasoline refineries. The union is seeking tighter restrictions on MTBE.

Maritime panel established

Workers in the maritime industry will get the personal attention of a new advisory committee assembled by OSHA.

In announcing the new panel, OSHA Administrator Joseph A. Dear said the group would focus special attention on the shipyard and marine cargo handling (longshore) industries.

Members of the Maritime Advisory Committee for Occupational Safety and Health (MACOSH) met for the first time March 22.

Labor representatives on the 18-member committee include Charles Bradford, Machinists director of occupational safety and health; Al Cernados, Longshoremen executive vice president; Chico McGill, safety and health committee chairman of Electrical Workers Local 733, Ingalls Shipyard; and Richard Olsen of the Longshoremen and Warehousemen coast committee.



Marianne Keffer Zweig/Page One Photography

Two workshops are conducted simultaneously, foreground and background, at the civil rights institute.

Unions vow to defend civil rights

By James B. Parks

Congressional attacks on civil rights threaten the economic rights of all Americans, union civil rights leaders said.

"Since 1979, real average wages for workers who are not supervisors have gone down by 10 percent . . . Working people are working more for less. It is no surprise that they are nervous and angry," AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue told the federation's civil rights institute. "And it is no surprise that some politicians, especially on the right, are playing the oldest game in the book — they are skillfully dividing middle-class and working families along racial lines."

Any such divisions are "toxic" to the labor movement, Donahue said, because it undermines the solidarity of workers. "The way we succeed is by bringing workers together, building their common ground, talking about common interest," he said.

In a ringing defense of affirmative action, Donahue said the AFL-CIO's position is "as clear as it can be. We support true affirmative action . . . a set of effective tools to help remedy the colossal injustice of discrimination, to give people an equal chance at jobs and good education, to make sure people have a ladder up, to open opportunity for people to use their talents and abilities."

Lenore Miller, president of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union and chair of the federation's Civil Rights Committee, said supporters of equality cannot afford "to be forced into a posture of retreat. We must move forward even if this Congress does not seem inclined to do so."

Although much progress has been made in civil rights over the past 30 years, the need for action is still strong, said AFL-CIO Civil Rights Director Richard Womack. The goals that organized labor and its civil rights allies fought for — equality in the workplace — can still be achieved. "But unity must be the code word," he said.

Responsible employers know that diversity is good business, said Gilbert F. Casellas, chairman of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. "The undeniable reality is that we simply can't afford to do without the talent, ambition and spirit of such an abundantly diverse population — ordinary folks who want no more than a fair shot at the American dream.

"Our future work force will be composed of more women, more minorities, more older people and more immigrants," Casellas said. "Corporate citizens — who are responsive to the bottom line — will make their workplaces more reflective of this diversity."

AFL-CIO Vice President Gloria Johnson of the Electronic Workers told participants that labor must fight any effort to dilute affirmative action. Johnson, who heads the Coalition of Labor Union Women, cited statistics in the Federal Glass Ceiling Commission report that women make up only 3 percent of top managers in the Fortune 500 companies and that women earn between 15 percent and 50 percent less than men for comparable jobs. "So long as such an unjust disparity exists, we will need affirmative action," she said.

Another reflection of forward-looking employers is found in the backing of bilingual education, said Juan Andrade, president of the U.S. Hispanic Leadership Conference. Every Hispanic household wants to learn English, but for the United States to be more competitive, workers need to be able to speak more than one language, he said.

Organized labor and its allies can win back political power lost in 1994 by mobilizing a voter registration effort among minorities, said Eddie N. Williams, president of the Joint Center for Economic and Political Studies, a Washington think tank.

Other speakers included Joslyn Williams, president of the Washington Metro AFL-CIO; AFL-CIO General Counsel Laurence Gold; COPE Director Richard Walsh; Assistant HUD Secretary Roberta Achtenberg; Assistant Labor Secretary Bernard Anderson; Ralph Neas, former executive director of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights; Matthew Finucane, executive director of the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance; Ralph Jimenez, president of the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement; AFSCME Women's Rights Department Director Catherine Collette; Edward Collins of the AFL-CIO organizing department; Anthony L. Harrison, director of the Electoral Participation Project; and Leslie Wolfe, director of the Center for Women's Policy Studies.

AFL-CIO steady voice on affirmative action

Organized labor has been a proponent and staunch defender of affirmative action from the beginning.

AFL-CIO President George Meany, through his executive assistant Lane Kirkland, was instrumental in keeping Title VII in the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Presidents Kennedy and Johnson both wavered, thinking coverage of the workplace might kill passage of the bill.

In 1983, when civil rights laws came under attack from the Reagan administration, the AFL-CIO praised the U.S. Supreme Court for upholding the right of workers to negotiate affirmative action programs.

In 1987, the AFL-CIO convention noted the need to protect all members of the work force, but within that framework reiterated support for voluntary affirmative action.

The AFL-CIO strongly supported the Civil Rights Act of 1991, which corrected several Reagan-era Supreme Court decisions that made it harder to prove discrimination.

Most recently, the federation in February 1995 condemned those trying to "narrow the scope of and weaken the anti-discrimination and affirmative action laws."

COURTS

'Living wage' required

The state of Wisconsin has been ordered to study and establish a new "living wage" after a court ruled its current $4.25-an-hour minimum wage violates the law.

An 82-year-old Wisconsin law requires a wage "sufficient to enable the employee receiving it to maintain himself or herself under conditions consistent with his or her welfare."

There is no legitimate relationship between the federal minimum wage and a true "living wage," said Dane County Circuit Court Judge Michael Nowaski, who added that the state's claim of "minimum comfort" on the $4.25-an-hour wage is "not supported by substantial evidence on the record."

The court, acting on a suit brought in 1993 by the Service Employees, determined that the state showed no evidence of considering the cost of living to workers when it last set its minimum wage.

The impact of the court's decision may be felt in such regionally diverse states as California, Colorado, New Jersey, New York and North Dakota, said SEIU attorney Larry Engelstein, who noted that those five states have statutes similar to the Wisconsin Living Wage Law, upon which the case was based.

PATCO debarment upheld

The U.S. Supreme Court refused to review a constitutional challenge to President Reagan's 1981 order debarring striking air traffic controllers from future employment with the Federal Aviation Administration.

The court, without comment, let stand an appeals court ruling in Dehainaut vs. Pena that the Office of Personnel Management did not violate the Constitution when it imposed an indefinite employment ban against 17,000 controllers represented by the Professional Air Traffic Controllers. President Clinton lifted the ban in 1993.

Several former controllers filed the suit in 1991 claiming the appeals court decision was an open invitation to then-President Bush to gut the civil service system and to ignore federal personnel laws.

Sex discrimination alleged

The Clothing and Textile Workers and 13 female employees are suing a Dallas window and door manufacturer for sexual discrimination.

The suit against Fojtasek Cos. seeks $3.9 million in damages and back pay, as well as reinstatement of the women. The suit claims the company practices sexual discrimination against its 1,200 majority female, Hispanic work force by denying job advancement and creating a hostile environment that included "unwelcome sexually suggestive language and unwelcome physical contact."

The union also has filed a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for national origin discrimination.

CWA unit wins $10 million

The Communications Workers ended a 12-year battle with Corporate Printing Co. when the company agreed to a $10 million settlement for back wages and benefits.

Some 66 members of Typographical Union 6, a local of the CWA, will share $4 million in wages and benefits, with the average award reaching $60,606, said local President James Grottola.

Corporate in 1975 signed a 10-year multiemployer contract that created an employer-funded benefits and productivity (BAP) fund that guaranteed lifetime payments to workers who were replaced by automation. In 1977, Corporate withdrew from the multiemployer group and announced it would not honor the BAP commitment past 1985.

The union filed grievances in 1983 when Corporate refused to pay its share to BAP, and the company dragged out the process over 12 years with three arbitrators and numerous court battles. In 1986, after refusing to negotiate a new contract in good faith with the union, the company also imposed a contract that reduced wages by 70 percent.

Besides the back wages, the settlement includes $3.7 million to reimburse the BAP fund for benefits it paid to workers, $1.1 million for the welfare fund and $1.2 million for union legal fees.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Unionized nurses are on the move to the White House in a protest of hospital obsession with profits.

Nurses march for quality care

Private hospitals put profits before patients

The health care battle didn't fade away with the last Congress. The warriors just shifted the battle to a new front.

More than 5,000 nurses — who form the front lines of patient care — took their cause from Capitol Hill to the White House in a march to protest the rise of new and dangerous hospital policies that are a hazard to American patients and families.

The nurses gathered at the Capitol March 31 for a rally and march down Pennsylvania Avenue. Among the specific points under protest were:

- A recent Supreme Court ruling declaring that staff nurses — those who direct less-skilled employees but have no authority to hire or fire — are "supervisors" and may no longer be covered under the National Labor Relations Act.
- Punitive actions against nurses who speak out on behalf of their patients for better working conditions.
- Record high hospital profits, as hospitals replace RNs with unskilled workers who work for less and thereby boost the financial bottom line.
- Mandatory "floating" of nurses to areas outside their fields of expertise, causing unsafe conditions.

"The hospital industry is being taken over by for-profit medical companies whose main concern is bottom-line care, not quality care," said Ann Twomey, vice president of AFT's Federation of Nurses and Health Care Professionals.

A survey of registered nurses released by the American Nurses Association last February shows that medical facilities are downsizing by cutbacks in registered nurses, resulting in sharply increased workloads for those who remain.

In addition, nearly half of the 1,835 respondents reported increased use of unlicensed assistants — minimally skilled workers with as little as four to six weeks of training — to provide direct patient care.

"Patients are being turned out because today it's patients for profits," said Gerald W. McEntee, president of AFSCME, which represents some 60,000 nurses nationwide.

"And nurses are being victimized across the land, all across America, by profit-driven managements and glory-hungry politicians," he said. "The risk to patients — patients they care for and patients they care about — is going up and up and up, and the quality of health care is going down and down and down."

There are about 2.2 million nurses in the nation, with some two-thirds employed in hospitals. Nurses point out that, in many instances, they are the only advocates for patients.

"We Americans have come to expect that a nurse will always be there when we need one," said Service Employees President John J. Sweeney, whose union represents 90,000 nurses. "We ask the people of this nation to give back just a little of the care they've received. Stand with us in the fight to protect and strengthen our nurse work force as the health care industry is restructured."

The nurses called on Congress to pass legislation to establish federal and state mandates for safe patient ratios; amend the NLRA to clarify that nurses are not supervisors solely because they direct the work of others in the course of professional, patient-care duties; and protect nurses who voice complaints regarding dangerous hospital conditions.

The rally was organized by the ANA.

— Colleen M. O'Neill

Pepsico says 'uh-huh' for Staley workers

By James B. Parks

Locked-out workers at A.E. Staley Manufacturing have gained support from a major Staley customer.

Pepsico recently wrote Paperworkers Local 7837 that it supports "a timely and fair resolution of the dispute, and has made that position known to Staley." Pepsico, parent company of Pepsi-Cola, together with Coca-Cola buy most of the Staley-produced corn sweetener, the union said.

Union members and their supporters launched a letter-writing campaign to both companies urging them not to use Staley products until the 21-month strike is settled. The union also plans to leaflet at Pepsico subsidiaries Pizza Hut, Taco Bell and KFC.

Miller Brewing, which bought about 7 percent of Staley sweetener, ended its contract in December.

The 760 Staley employees were locked out on June 27, 1993, when they rejected company demands of unlimited subcontracting, the loss of several hundred bargaining unit jobs, 12-hour rotating shifts with no premium pay and the gutting of seniority.

The campaign is the latest in a series of actions designed to draw national and international attention to the dispute. Religious leaders from the United States and Britain continue to pressure Neil Shaw, chief executive officer of Staley's parent, Tate & Lyle, to negotiate.

UPIU President Wayne Glenn on April 10 visited the workers to pledge his full support of their cause and that of striking workers at two other Decatur plants. Some 4,000 working men and women in Decatur are fighting three union-busting employers — Caterpillar, Staley and Bridgestone/Firestone.

Glenn's visit follows an appearance by AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland, Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue and AFL-CIO Vice Presidents John Sweeney of the Service Employees, George Kourpias of the Machinists, George Becker of the Steelworkers and James Norton of the Graphic Communications Union. Rubber Workers President Kenneth L. Coss and UAW President Owen Bieber also have visited, as have Presidents Gerald W. McEntee of AFSCME and Richard L. Trumka of the Mine Workers.

Kirkland announced the establishment of a central strike fund, started with a $20,000 contribution from the federation and additional pledges by affiliates, to provide material support to the striking and locked-out workers. Bieber has asked that all contributions go to the other two unions, since the UAW strike fund is sufficient to provide $300 a week per striker.

Contributions to help the strikers may be sent to the AFL-CIO Fund for Strike Relief, 815 16th St., N.W., Room 703, Washington, D.C. 20006.

Hospital board coup yields contract for Mercy nurses

By Colleen M. O'Neill

After sticking it out on the picket line through a winter of discontent, striking nurses gained a first contract and returned to work in Port Jervis, N.Y.

The strikers at Mercy Community Hospital — numbering more than 100, including part-time nurses — passed through doors once darkened by their "permanent" replacements. With more than 50 scabs eligible to vote, the hospital had orchestrated a vote to decertify the newly elected union.

However, the campaign for justice that took strikers to Michigan and points throughout New York State earned the admiration and inspired the solidarity of thousands of trade unionists — so much so that the religious order that sponsors the hospital finally overruled the lay board of directors, reasserted authority and forced a settlement.

"It was a group of women in Port Jervis — the Mercy RNs — who began this struggle for justice, and ultimately it was a group of women — the Sisters of Mercy — who insured that justice was achieved," said Terry Alaimo, an organizer for an unaffiliated Local 1199 union that organized the workers.

The struggle began in November 1993 when the registered nurses voted 82-49 to form a Local 1199 unit. After protracted negotiations, the nurses went out on strike Sept. 1, 1994, and were "permanently replaced" four weeks later.

By mid-December, the hospital administration announced it had withdrawn recognition of Local 1199, and the nurses were engaged in a full-scale battle.

Much of the campaign concentrated on Catholic teachings in support of workers' rights to organize, strike and not be permanently replaced.

The Michigan AFL-CIO informed affiliated unions of the strike and the role of Mercy Health Systems, based in Farmington Hills, Mich. Those unions in turn told MHS it was advertising its conduct to 700,000 union members throughout the country. Among the unions sending the message to Mercy were the Service Employees, UAW, AFSCME, Teamsters, Operating Engineers and the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union.

Michigan AFL-CIO President Frank Garrison sent a letter to Sister Gretchen Elliott, who heads the Sisters of Mercy in Detroit, asking her help in aiding the Port Jervis strikers, as did the presidents of Division 726 of Transport Workers, Detroit AFT, IBT Joint Council 43 and the Michigan Education Association.

The Orange County (N.Y.) Building and Construction Trades Council sent a similar letter to Sister Pat Wolf, the president of the Sisters of Mercy New York regional community.

Also providing support to the striking nurses were other units of AFT, SEIU, Elevator Constructors and AFSCME from New Jersey and New York, along with multiple New York state elected officials.

The combination of the visible presence of strikers outside the hospital on a daily basis and the pressure on the Sisters of Mercy by labor and religious activists and politicians eventually led the nuns to intervene.

When the 15-member hospital board refused to accede to the order's wishes and settle, the nuns added nine new directors — four nuns, two lawyers and three health care specialists.

Within days, the new board recognized the union and signed a 70-page contract calling for four wage increases of 4 percent each.



Photo by Dick Tomlinson

Maryland Gov. Parris Glendening addressed some 1,000 trade unionists from metropolitan Baltimore after a state House committee voted 15-5 to kill so-called "right-to-work" legislation. Seated next to Glendening are from left: AFL-CIO Region III Director Kevin Kistler; Ernest Grecco, president of the Metropolitan Baltimore AFL-CIO; and Primo Padeletti, secretary-treasurer of the Maryland AFL-CIO.

Orange Co. workers squeezed

Oregon, Puerto Rico bills limit public bargaining

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

Public employees continue their fights from state legislatures to county courthouses to city halls, as they are being asked to bear the brunt of poor fiscal management.

In Orange County, Calif., public employees now face layoffs because of the county's bankruptcy. Workers in Oregon are facing new limits on public employee bargaining and, in Puerto Rico, the promise of public-sector bargaining has been sullied by severe limitations.

Orange County was expected to begin delivering pink slips around Easter to nearly 300 eligibility technicians in the Department of Social Services. The workers are represented by AFSCME Council 36.

Orange County AFL-CIO President Bill Fogarty criticized the Board of Supervisors for keeping the workers' salaries low and now "wanting to use them as scapegoats for the layoff process."

"They are for the most part single mothers," he said. "Many of them live paycheck to paycheck. Many will probably have to apply for the programs they administer for the county. It doesn't make sense to cut their positions."

The county officials also voted unanimously to approve a labor-backed 0.5 percent "bankruptcy recovery tax" and ordered a June 27 countywide vote on the measure, which would raise the county's sales tax from 7.75 percent to 8.25 percent for the next 10 years.

The tax is dedicated to preserving essential county services and guaranteeing payments to schools, cities and other agencies with money in the ill-fated county investment pool.

The unions will conduct town meetings on the tax referendum. About 5,000 Orange County workers are represented by the Fire Fighters, Teamsters, AFSCME, Service Employees and Operating Engineers.

Meanwhile, in Oregon, the Republican-controlled state Senate voted April 6 to restrict the scope of public-sector collective bargaining. The measure now goes to the House, also controlled by Republicans.

The legislation would mark the most dramatic change in public-sector bargaining since the state's Public Employees Collective Bargaining Act was adopted in 1973. It would limit the scope of bargaining to economics, job security and safety issues; eliminate mandatory interest arbitration for public safety workers and allow them to strike; eliminate fact-finding from the dispute resolution process; redefine which workers are considered management and thereby excluded from bargaining units; and eliminate the public communications ban during negotiations.

The bill jeopardizes the lives of police and firefighters, compromises public safety and increases the threat of public-sector strikes, said Sen. Randy Leonard (D), a member of the Senate Labor and Government Relations Committee and president of the Portland Fire Fighters.

"We don't have any rights," he added. "While the bill would allow bargaining on safety equipment issues, it would not allow bargaining on safety staffing issues as is done now."

Provisions to eliminate "fair share" fees and payroll deduction of union dues were deleted from the bill. Democratic Gov. John Kitzhaber indicated he would not approve the bill with these provisions.

But the measures may be placed in another bill and referred directly to a popular referendum.

In Puerto Rico, concerned labor leaders went straight to Gov. Pedro Rosello's office to express their dismay about amendments to a public employee collective bargaining bill. The amendments, which passed the Senate by a 16-2 vote, would place a cap on contract negotiations, limit salaries to a percentage of an agency's operating budget and reduce "fair share" dues to 65 percent from 100 percent.

Dubbing the Senate bill a "disaster," Puerto Rico AFL-CIO President Valentin Hernandez vowed to lobby aggressively against the bill in the House. The Senate answered to big business and closed its doors to labor when discussing this bill, he explained.

"We did not get the chance to approach the Senate and give our opinion on the changes they wanted to make," said Hernandez. "In the House, however, they have given us a chance to speak out, which will help our cause."

Rosello agreed to consult with labor prior to making any decisions about the legislation. A House committee was expected to take up the unionization proposal and send it to the House floor after Easter.

Flight Attendants foil Icelandair tactics

The Flight Attendants at Tower Air refused to allow themselves to be used as strikebreakers for Icelandair.

In a show of international solidarity with the Icelandic Flight Attendants Association, AFA exercised its right to refuse work on "sub-service flights" after learning that Tower Air had agreed to provide service in the event of a strike at Icelandair. A three-day strike began March 27.

"This is an important step forward for coordinated labor actions on an international level," said AFA President Patricia A. Friend. "As the airline industry continues to expand globally, unions must be prepared to defend workers' rights at home and abroad."

On March 28, AFA-represented American Trans Air also turned down a request by Icelandair to provide sub-service operations.

"It is a very positive development in our relationship with these two carriers that management ultimately decided not to put our flight attendants in the position of strikebreakers," Friend said.

"No one can afford to stand alone in this rapidly changing world," said Thora Sen, manager of the Icelandic flight attendants.

BARGAINING

Markets lock out 32,000

Some 32,000 Food and Commercial Workers were locked out by three Northern California supermarket chains after the workers rejected the latest contract offer.

The lockout came after 18,000 workers struck Safeway April 6. The companies — Safeway, Lucky and Save Mart — had agreed that a strike against one would be followed by a lockout at all three chains.

The union had asked for a wage increase and continued health benefits. The employers said they wanted a "cost-neutral" contract that eliminated costs in other areas to pay for a wage increase. They also proposed cutting benefits because of increasing competition from non-union and warehouse stores. Ironically, some of the warehouse stores are owned by Lucky and Safeway.

Replacement workers were on the job the morning after the April 8 lockout at some stores. All three chains began advertising for and training replacement workers a week before the strike.

Negotiations are continuing over contracts covering 10,000 UFCW members at Albertson's, Raley's and other West Coast supermarkets. The contracts, which expired March 4, have been extended.

Chrysler, GM pacts ratified

The UAW returned to work at two Big Three auto plants after ratifying new agreements that ensure job security.

Some 5,500 workers at General Motors' Pontiac East truck plant approved an agreement that commits the automaker to adding up to 900 jobs. The agreement ended a six-day strike.

Under the accord, GM will hire 200 laid-off workers from the former Pontiac West plant to ease assembly-line speedups at Pontiac East. The company will add 700 jobs at Pontiac East to allow other workers to go to school.

The contract also includes the possibility of a third shift at the plant and settles a number of grievances, including nearly $3 million in back-pay complaints.

Meanwhile, the contract covering some 5,700 workers at Chrysler's Kokomo, Ind., transmission plant guarantees job security and better health and safety.

Under the settlement, ratified April 3, Chrysler will assemble a new generation of truck transmissions at the plant. The agreement also settles several health and safety grievances.

AFSCME signs N.Y. accord

The Civil Service Employees Association/AFSCME Local 1000 gained a new four-year contract with New York State that freezes wages in the first year and raises them by more than 7 percent over the next three years.

The contract, which took effect April 2, also contains job security provisions that would give the union a voice in privatization efforts and improvements in health insurance that would reduce certain co-payments.

The contract covers some 95,000 state workers in mostly blue-collar and secretarial positions.

10 Vegas hotels agree

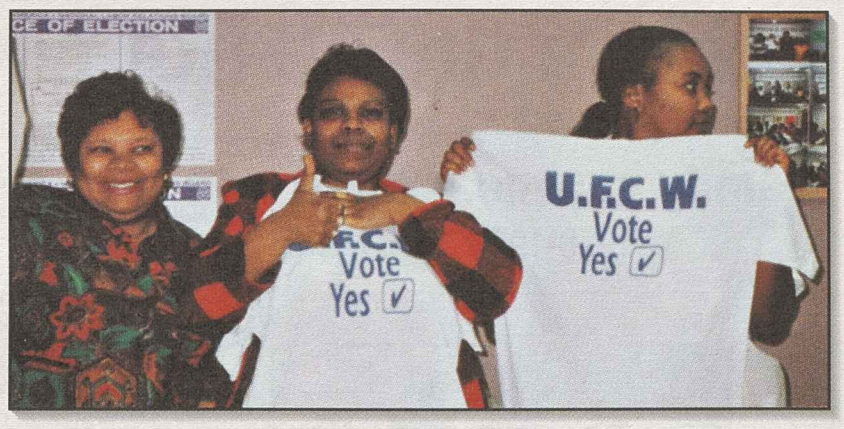
The Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees ratified new three-year contracts with 10 Las Vegas hotels.

That leaves only three hotels — Sahara, Hacienda and Frontier — without contracts. Members of HERE Local 226 have been on strike at Frontier for more than three years.

The contracts cover 6,000 employees at Stardust, Fremont, Binion's Horseshoe, Fitzgerald's, Showboat, El Cortez, Western, Plaza, Golden Gate and Las Vegas Club hotels. The contracts all contain wage increases of at least 75 cents per hour. But the deals with Plaza, Golden Gate and Las Vegas Club call for bigger wage increases because the workers there are paid lower wages than the others.

All the agreements mirror HERE's contracts with other Vegas hotels and include employer neutrality clauses for organizing new properties, bans on subcontracting bartender or culinary jobs, continuing fully paid health care benefits and increased promotion from within.

Care for the Caregivers



Nursing Home drive gives workers chance to do vital job

By Muriel H. Cooper

They wipe faces and bottoms. They lift bodies and spirits. Sometimes they provide the last smile, the last touch for our mothers, fathers and grandparents.

Nursing home workers give care in an environment where there often is little care given to them, a situation the Food and Commercial Workers would like to change.

An aggressive organizing campaign in the South is bringing union representation to many workers who are just beginning to realize they can have fair treatment, decent wages and benefits and a real voice on the job.

That was the reason to celebrate recently for workers at the Clearview and Providence Nursing Homes in Thomaston, Ga., who gathered for a victory party amid the strains of "You Will Know," a song by Black Men United that talks about taking positive control of your life.

Clearview workers had voted 44-11 for UFCW representation. A few blocks away, Providence home workers had cast a 43-24 vote for the union. Both properties are operated by Beverly Enterprises, the nation's largest nursing home chain and one with a history of fighting organizing drives by both the UFCW and the Service Employees.

The UFCW's "Care for the Caregiver Campaign" is spreading the good news about union membership to workers at various nursing homes in the South and in Indiana. The union also has a joint organizing program with SEIU to organize nursing home workers in Wisconsin and Minnesota.

UFCW involves rank-and-file union members in organizing, giving non-union workers a close-up look at how the union makes a difference.

'Premiums equal half my pay'

Pearl Howard, a certified nursing assistant from Warrenton, Ga., three hours away from Thomaston, says she has worked in nursing homes for 15 years and "it's about the same in every home. We're overworked, underpaid and don't receive benefits. We need affordable insurance, some kind of retirement, benefits that help families save money.

"If my kids get sick, I have to pay for it. It would take half of my paycheck to buy the insurance the company offers."

Beverly operates 730 homes nationwide, with 26 properties in Georgia and 21 in Alabama. The UFCW has organized seven Beverly facilities in Birmingham, and the Steelworkers have organized one. SEIU represents workers in two Beverly homes in Georgia and in 60 homes nationwide.

Beverly's chronic short-staffing makes it difficult for the caregivers to give the care that is necessary, said Vickie Huff, who has worked at Providence for three years. "With a union we can do our work properly and have time to spend with the patients," she said.

The union example

Thomaston is a textbook example of how union organizing can improve the lives in a community. A victory in one plant lifted everyone.

After a six-year struggle, workers at Martha Mills voted for Rubber Workers representation and signed a contract in late 1994. Wage earners throughout Thomaston got the message. The desire to achieve dignity, self-respect and decent wages spread through the town.

"Everybody knows everybody in this town," said Local URW 1158 Vice President Charles Flowers. "The people saw our union as starting something positive. They wanted dignity, they wanted to be recognized for the work they do."

The community also responded to the churches, which got involved in the organizing effort. "The ministers told the workers not to be afraid, to stand up for their rights," said UFCW spokesman Greg Denier.

Workers were warned that management would say or do anything to keep the union out. They would call captive audience meetings, show anti-union movies — anything.

"Don't be fooled," said UFCW organizer Julee Jerkovich. "If the vote outcome is negative, you will have to wait a year and start the entire process all over again."

Carolyn Price took the warning to heart. After working at Providence for five years, "I knew it was time for a change. I just felt it," she said. "I encouraged people to sign their cards. We were already being mistreated, so why not try something different?

"I resent that (the residents) aren't getting the care they deserve," said Price. "Sometimes we can't change them right away when they wet their clothes and linen. The union will help us get better benefits but it will also give us a chance to see about my patients. We prayed for this day."

Troubles with Beverly

Beverly is notorious for mistreating its workers and patients. A January AFL-CIO Food and Allied Service Trades Department study uncovered a "woeful pattern of poor (patient) care."

State officials last year uncovered numerous deficiencies in a Beverly facility in Anniston, Ala., where the UFCW has just begun an organizing drive. But workers told union organizers that many practices and problems never made it to the state inspectors' list.

"There is discrimination in the treatment of patients," said a worker who did not want to be identified. "Patients are referred to as charity cases. If a patient doesn't drink the Ensure (a food supplement) that patient is billed, then it is given to another patient and that patient is billed.

In reality, American working families are unknowingly being double-billed, first paying 75 percent of nursing home costs through Medicare and Medicaid and then picking up the tab for worker injuries caused by inadequate staffing, training and equipment in many nursing homes.

These deficiencies have earned the nursing home industry the dubious title of "one of the most dangerous jobs in America."

"The injury rate among nursing home workers rose 55 percent over the past decade," said a recent SEIU report.

Anniston workers report that they can be assigned to monitor 30 to 40 patients on a shift. During that time, they must feed, bathe, change and physically move patients. Many times workers are lifting patients that are double and triple their own body weight without the proper equipment or braces.

"Sometimes we are so busy that residents are only bathed twice weekly. And bed-ridden patients don't get turned every two hours to prevent bedsores.

"But don't be mistaken," said the worker. "I love my job. The residents are like family. It's just that your day is all messed up when you walk in and have to put up with things you know are wrong.

"We've been wanting a union for a long time and I hope we win by a landslide."

SEIU launches campaign for 'dignity, rights and respect'

Nursing home workers are no longer going to be the "fall guys" for greedy nursing home owners and operators.

With support from the Service Employees, Food and Commercial Workers, AFT and other unions, nursing home workers are demanding to be treated as skilled, professional employees.

SEIU, which represents 75,000 workers in nearly 1,000 nursing homes, assembled more than 400 workers from 26 states at a conference in Pittsburgh, where they adopted a program aimed at achieving "dignity, rights and respect" for nursing home employees.

The union has taken on local communities and state legislatures demanding fair wages, adequate staffing levels and safety for nursing home workers. SEIU will be negotiating contracts this year with nursing homes that employ some 40,000 workers.

The union hopes to coordinate bargaining on a nationwide basis.

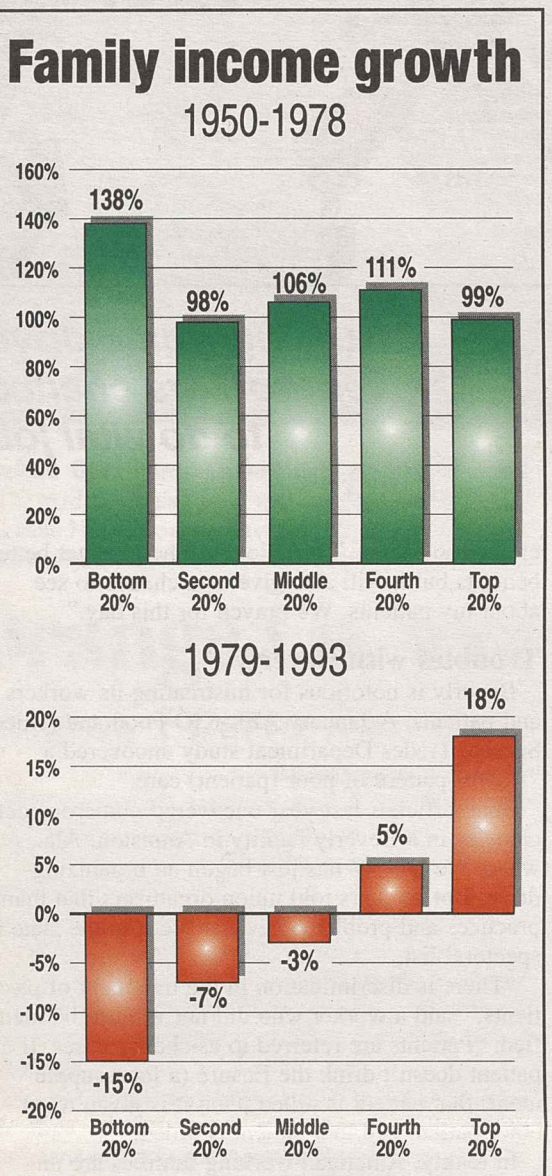
The industry employs about 1.8 million workers nationwide. Nursing homes are a growth industry, expected to add 750,000 new jobs in the next decade. The workers are predominantly African-American women who serve as primary caregivers for the aged and bed-ridden.

"Nursing home workers take care of the ill, but have no health insurance for their children," said SEIU President John J. Sweeney. "They take care of the communities' mothers and fathers, but are written up if they stay home to care for a sick child. They take care of the elderly, but have no retirement plan to fall back on in their old age."

The injury levels among workers has contributed to the staffing crisis and code violations in nursing homes. A SEIU study found that nearly 20 percent of all workers are injured every year.

"As long as nursing home workers are silent, nursing home operators can blame poor care on individual workers, instead of the real abuse caused by short-staffing, high turnover, lack of training and nursing home operators' greed," Sweeney said.

Raid on the 40-hour week goes into overtime



Source: Bureau of the Census, Department of Commerce. Alll data converted to 1993 dollars

The growing disparity between the rich and poor in the United States — the evolution of a two-tier society described by the Dunlop Commission — can be seen in this data comparing the growth in real family income by quintiles for two time periods — from the '50s through the '70s and the '80s through 1993.

Unemployment Rate

March	5.5 percent
From Feb. '95	+ 0.1 percent

Leading Indicators

February	-0.2 percent
January	Unchanged

AFL-CIO NEWSGRAFIC

By David Kameras

The 40-hour workweek, a premier American labor standard championed by trade unionists through many years of fighting at the bargaining table and in Congress, is under fierce attack on Capitol Hill by business groups and their newly powerful Republican friends.

The big business assault on overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act is coming on several fronts. The argument made most often is that employers need flexibility to pay workers straight time on an 80-hour, two-week cycle, which may be more than 40 hours in one week, less in another.

In an argument put forward March 30 before the House Economic and Educational Opportunities subcommittee on work force protections, the Labor Policy Association suggested that salaried workers should be charged for taking time off as unpaid leave and that they should be paid straight time for work in excess of 40 hours a week. Current law designates such workers as hourly, thereby making them eligible for premium pay.

But this weakening of the overtime rule, argued Nicholas Clark, assistant general counsel of the Food and Commercial Workers, "would greatly expand incentives for employers to pay salaries, not overtime, and not hire workers, but punish workers by making them work longer."

By allowing employers to dock salaried employees' pay for partial-day absences, the proposed "Workplace Leave Fairness" bill "would cut the pay of middle-class workers, drastically reduce the flexibility those workers need to care for their families and potentially reduce employment levels," Clark said.

The attacks on overtime are but one front in the war against labor standards that includes the Davis-Bacon and Service Contract prevailing wage laws and the minimum wage. Repealing these worker protections would widen the gap that creates the "two-tiered society" identified by the Dunlop Commission.

"The American middle class itself is now splitting apart, based largely on education, age and job description," President Clinton has noted. "If you don't have the skills and you're not in the workplace where you can hook into one of these groups that is growing, then you tend to work harder every year for lower wages."

Clinton has proposed increasing the minimum wage by 90 cents over two years, from $4.25 to $5.15. But House Majority Leader Richard K. Armey (R-Texas) has stated he would fight that proposal "with every fiber in my being," and instead has called for the dissolution of the minimum wage.

Armey has disputed evidence compiled by economists David Card and Alan Krueger that shows job gain, not job loss, in the wake of a higher minimum wage in New Jersey. At a press conference called to tout a competing study, Armey was joined by Rep. James Saxton (R-N.J.), vice chairman of the Joint Economic Committee, who said, "We Republicans are in favor of creating entry-level jobs, but we don't think it should be mandated by the government."

Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.), author of one of the bills to raise the minimum wage, predicted that "this issue is going to be on the floor of the House and the floor of the Senate, and I personally think it will pass."

"People who make more in one month than people on minimum wage make in a year are the ones who say they can't afford an increase in minimum wage," added Sen. Patrick J. Leahy (D-Vt.).

Republican proponents of the anti-overtime legislation say it is needed in the wake of court decisions that may leave employers open to potential liability for docking workers' pay, but the UFCW's Clark calls that argument "sky-is-falling" rhetoric. "Any problem with the private-sector regulations should be fixed by regulation, not legislation," he said.

"The bill is completely one-sided in its approach," Clark added. "Employers win while workers lose. This bill could reduce the pay of millions of salaried workers in the private work force, and greatly expand employer incentives to pay salaries, rather than overtime, to many millions of workers who currently are paid on an hourly basis. This will cost real jobs, as employers require current employees to work more hours on a salaried basis rather than hiring additional workers."

Lonnie Golden, an economics professor at Penn State University, said the proposed changes "amount to a zero-sum game. What employers gain in flexibility, workers lose."

"Private and public managers already possess the flexibility to schedule work in almost any configuration they wish," he said. "What employers truly seek, then, is pay flexibility, not hours flexibility. Broadening the definition of 'exempt' and permitting more pay-docking may open the floodgates. It encourages employers to reclassify relatively lower-paying positions as salaried within a supervisory-sounding job title.

"Workers will likely interpret this as an effective (back-door) cut in pay per hour worked," he said.

The UFCW proposed that the committee focus on raising salary levels, which have been stagnant for 20 years. The minimum salary level for executive or administrative workers is $155 per week, and for professional workers, $170 per week, levels below or at the current minimum wage. Yet the intent of the levels established in the 1975 FLSA was to ensure that only relatively high-paid workers would be classified as exempt from the hourly designation.

"Approximately half of UFCW members are women, many of whom are the sole or primary breadwinners for their families," Clark noted. "These and many millions of other workers depend on the 40-hour week and overtime payments to maintain their standard of living and still have time to care for their families.

"Protecting the 40-hour workweek and preserving the weekend for families should be the top priority for this committee," he said.

Unemployment rate up slightly as factory jobs decline

The number of jobless Americans looking for work edged up in March as the economic recovery showed signs of slowing down.

While the unemployment rate moved from 5.4 percent in February to 5.5 percent in March, representing 54,000 workers, overall employment increased by 150,000. Factory jobs declined for the first time in 15 months.

The official unemployment total in March was 7.2 million, but nearly 13.5 million workers suffered unemployment and under-employment if the 4.5 million working part-time for economic reasons and the 1.7 million other available workers who searched for work in the past year are added in, noted AFL-CIO economist Markley Roberts.

While job growth was recorded in services and construction, there were small drops in manufacturing, retail trade and government, and overtime in manufacturing was still at a high 4.7 hours per week.

The decline in manufacturing jobs may be an indication that the Federal Reserve Board's actions to choke off the economic recovery are having an effect. Overall, factory jobs have yet to fully bounce back from the last recession, and are still 210,000 below the point where the recovery began two years ago.

Long-term joblessness had a large increase in March, rising by 140,000 to 1.3 million, affecting 19 percent of jobless workers.

The jobless rate for adult men was 4.7 percent; for adult women, 4.9 percent; for African-Americans, 9.8 percent; for Hispanics, 9.1 percent; for teenagers, 16.1 percent; and for African-American teenagers, 31.2 percent.

Figures from February showed that, of the 11 largest states, California topped the list with an unemployment rate of 7.6 percent, followed by New York (6.6 percent), Michigan (6 percent) and Pennsylvania (6 percent). The lowest rates were recorded in Ohio (3.8 percent), North Carolina (3.9 percent), Florida (4.4 percent), Illinois (4.4 percent) and Massachusetts (4.6 percent).

Decreases in unemployment were most dramatic in Florida (1.3 percent), New Jersey (1.1 percent), California (0.9 percent), Arizona (0.8 percent) and Mississippi (0.8 percent). The largest increases were recorded in North Carolina (0.8 percent) and Montana (0.7 percent).

Meanwhile, a new report by the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago belittles the loss in factory jobs by suggesting that the number of blue-collar unemployed may be overstated by as much as 50 percent.

In the latest move in the central bank's campaign to change economic measurements, the Fed argued that while 400,000 manufacturing jobs were lost during the last recession, the impact was partially offset by blue-collar employment in temporary jobs, which grew from 9 percent of the "personnel supply" industry in 1983 to 23 percent in 1993. However, such jobs are statistically classified in the service sector of the economy.

The report went on to observe that temporary workers are more than twice as likely to be unemployed after one year and are more likely to be moved to part-time work. They are also paid 34 percent less than their permanent counterparts.

— David Kameras

UNION NEWS

ILWU boosts organizing

Members of the Longshoremen and Warehousemen approved a $2 monthly dues increase for organizing.

Money from the dues assessment will be used to train and hire organizers and to target key areas and industries in southern and northern California, Puget Sound, Wash., Oregon and Alaska. Local unions will be able to apply for organizing money from the international.

The vote on the dues increase was the result of a resolution adopted unanimously by the convention in April 1994 that directed the union to allocate "resources to put organizers in the field with adequate facilities and support."

Alabama jobs overstated

The Mercedes-Benz plant set for Birmingham, Ala., will create 8,000 fewer jobs than originally claimed, a study by the Midwest Center for Labor Research reveals.

The tax breaks awarded to Mercedes and 86 other companies by the state were justified by "highly exaggerated" estimates of job creation and economic benefit to the state, the report noted. Mercedes was promised massive up-front subsidies amounting to $118 million.

The report, based on statistics from a 1993 study by the Alabama Development Office, found that ADO's estimates for Mercedes' initial purchases within Alabama were inflated by 400 percent and annual plant income was exaggerated by $276 million.

A coalition of labor, religious, community and environmental groups are recommending changes in state laws so that such giveaways to corporations cannot be made without substantial return to citizens.

Flood victims get relief

Union Privilege has some welcome good news for trade unionists in flood-ravaged California.

Members affected by the floods or disruption of mail or other services who participate in Union MasterCard, Loan, Union Member Mortgage and Real Estate and Life Insurance programs may be eligible for payment extensions, financial assistance and other special help.

Assistance plans vary, so members should contact the programs directly.

HRDI gets AmeriCorps grant

The Corporation for National and Community Service has awarded the Human Resources Development Institute, the AFL-CIO's training arm, a $200,000 grant to help AmeriCorps*USA grantees manage their administrative and financial management systems.

HRDI also will develop an instructional manual and conduct regional conferences, workshops and seminars to instruct grantees on how to successfully manage federal funds.

Through AmeriCorps*USA, the corporation funds community service programs and supports service-learning programs in elementary, middle and secondary schools, community-based organizations and post-secondary institutions.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

The National Organization for Women's April 9 rally against domestic violence brought trade unionists from across the country to the Washington mall. Addressing the crowd is Electronic Workers Vice President Gloria Johnson, who is president of the Coalition of Labor Union Women and an AFL-CIO vice president. She is flanked, from left, by Anna Padia, director of human rights for the Newspaper Guild; Kitty Peddicord, director of the Government Employees Women's Fair Practices Department; Teamsters Vice President Diana Kilmury; Nicole Denier; Food and Commercial Workers Vice President Pat Scarcelli; Lela Foreman, Communications Workers director of women's activities, community services and community affairs; and Matthew Finucane, executive director of the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance.

NEWSMAKERS

The U.S. Senate confirmed the appointment of Machinists President **George J. Kourpias** to the board of the Overseas Private Investment Corp. OPIC is a government-sponsored corporation that insures U.S. investments in the less developed countries, on the condition that the company observes internationally recognized worker rights and standards.

The three-member National Mediation Board has a full roster of members with the confirmation of **Kenneth B. Hipp**, a Honolulu labor lawyer. Hipp replaces Republican **Patrick J. Cleary**. The three-member board has jurisdiction over railroad and airline bargaining under the Railway Labor Act.

Gerald Shea, director of the AFL-CIO's Employee Benefits Department and executive assistant to Secretary-Treasurer **Tom Donahue**, will be nominated by President Clinton to serve on the Social Security Advisory Board, the White House said. The president also announced his intention to nominate former U.S. Sen. **Harlan Mathews** (D-Tenn.) and **William Brooks**, a Department of Labor official in the Bush administration. The board will advise the Social Security commissioner on the pension and disability segments of the act.

AWARDS

Robert A. Georgine, president of the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department, was one of six honorees at the "Heroes of Public Housing" ceremony. "These are just a few of the people who grew up in public housing and made something important of their lives," said Housing and Urban Development Secretary **Henry Cisneros**.

DEATHS

William A. Gillen, a past president of the Insurance Workers and retired assistant director of the George Meany Center for Labor Studies, died of cancer at his Maryland home. He was 76.

Gillen, a Philadelphia native, moved to the Washington area in 1955 as president of his union, a CIO affiliate. With Gillen guiding the way, the Insurance Workers merged with its AFL counterpart, the Insurance Agents, in 1959.

Gillen became president of the merged union, which became part of the Food and Commercial Workers in 1983.

Gillen stepped down as president in 1976 to become the assistant director of the Meany Center, a post he held until retiring in 1984. Gillen also served on the executive board of the Industrial Union Department.

"Bill had the rare gift of being able to share with others his great enthusiasm and his wealth of experience as a union officer," said AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland.

He is survived by his wife, a son and a sister.

Richard H. Nolan, former Operating Engineers executive vice president and New York state official, died after a short illness in Florida. He was 87.

Nolan, who joined IUOE Local 15 in 1928, became New York regional director in 1959 and was elected executive vice president of the union in 1964. He was a pension expert who was instrumental in improving portability for Engineers.

He served as vice president of the New York state AFL-CIO in the 1960s and was named to the state mediation board in 1972. He is survived by two sons, a brother and two grandchildren.

RESOURCES

WETA-TV, a Washington, D.C. public broadcasting station that is producing a 90-minute television documentary on the life of **A. Philip Randolph**, is looking for visuals, memorabilia and artifacts relating to Randolph's life and career. The producer also would like to interview persons about their experiences with Randolph. Contact Averi Livingston, WETA-TV coordinating producer, P.O. Box 2626, Washington, D.C. 20013; or call collect at 703/998-2705.

The AFL-CIO and Cornell University's **School of Industrial and Labor Relations** are requesting papers on occupational and industry-based studies; worker attitudes and the union's message; countering employer tactics; workplace committees; employee involvement and 8(a)2; the current legal environment and organizing outside the certification election process; and getting a first contract and staying organized. The papers, of 750-1,000 words, will be presented at the Union/University research conference in April 1996. Six copies of the proposal should be sent by June 1 to AFL-CIO/Cornell Research Conference, Office of the Dean, ILR School, Ives Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y. 14853-3901.

The **1995 Western Semester Program**, sponsored by the George Meany Center for Labor Studies and the AFL-CIO Education Department, will be offered July 16-Aug. 11 at the Hyatt Rickeys Hotel and Conference Center in Palo Alto, Calif. Thirteen courses are available, including organizing, contract negotiation, communications and arbitration. For more information, contact the George Meany Center for Labor Studies at 301/431-6400.

CONVENTIONS

The **Coalition of Labor Union Women's** 8th Biennial Convention will be held Oct. 12-15 at the Hyatt Regency in Dearborn, Mich. The convention originally was scheduled for Denver.

The 1970 Postal Strike and Its Effect on Labor-Management Relations in the U.S. Postal Industry, a forum sponsored by Cornell University, will be held May 10-12 at the Huntington Hilton in Melville, N.Y. For more information, call 516/876-3040.

Workplace 2000: Women's Rights, Workers' Rights Strengthening Women's Voices in the Workplace will showcase the latest research and demonstration projects that have changed the American workplace. The conference is May 11-12 at Cornell University, ILR Conference Center, 16 East 34th St., 6th Floor, New York City. Contact Johanna Morales-Brown at 212/340-2800.

PUBLICATIONS

NAFTAmath: The First Year by the AFL-CIO Task Force on Trade examines the impact of the North American Free Trade Agreement after one year. Contact the AFL-CIO Reproduction and Mailings Division, 815 16th St. N.W., Room 209, Washington, D.C. 20006; 202/637-5041.

Unions insist on worker rights in Chile trade

By David Kameras

The AFL-CIO is insisting that any new free trade agreement with Chile must respect labor rights and standards, and that "simple expansion of the North American Free Trade Agreement is unacceptable."

In a letter to U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Thomas R. Donahue noted that the federation, in conjunction with its counterpart in Chile, the Central Unitaria de Trabajadores (CUT), endorsed bilateral negotiations so long as they "led to an agreement on, among other things, respect for international labor rights and standards."

"The administration's decision to reject a bilateral approach and proceed with negotiations that would lead to Chilean accession to NAFTA makes the attainment of this goal more difficult," Donahue stated.

Nonetheless, Donahue indicated labor's desire to work with the White House, with the hopes that the negotiations "might result in a new standard for trade agreements that would elevate the interests of workers to the same level as the interests of companies."

Among the provisions the AFL-CIO believes must be integral to a new trade agreement are freedom of association, the right to organize and bargain collectively, prohibition of forced labor and employment discrimination, and development of rules on core labor standards such as occupational health and safety, hours of work and a minimum age for child labor.

These rights and standards should be subject to the same dispute settlement procedures as those available to property interests — a provision workers did not get in the NAFTA side agreements, Donahue pointed out.

The AFL-CIO will oppose any "fast-track" negotiation proposal that excludes labor rights and standards and environmental protections, Donahue said.

Republicans in Congress, meanwhile, are warning that such provisions could scuttle an agreement on Chile.

Senate Finance Committee Chairman Bob Packwood (R-Ore.) told Kantor that even the anemic labor and environmental standards contained in NAFTA would doom chances for approval of a Chile pact.

"I think you may have to take your choice one way or the other as to what you want," he said.

Finance subcommittee on trade Chairman Charles Grassley (R-Iowa) added, "a clean bill . . . without extraneous provisions" — i.e., labor and environment — would be necessary for congressional passage.

However, Kantor replied, "It would be rather strange and somewhat asymmetrical if Chile acceded to the agreement without having to take on all the obligations the other three nations have undertaken."

Meanwhile, the International Labor Organization voted April 7 to continue discussions aimed at linking social progress with world trade, but put off addressing the use of a sanctions-based social clause to penalize countries that don't meet global standards.

The U.S. government has pushed for such a social clause at both the ILO and the World Trade Organization, the new regime established by the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

The question of labor standards is vigorously opposed by some members of the WTO, especially developing countries that have sought to retain the use of child labor.

However, "We don't believe we can do business as usual when there is continual exploitation of human beings, imprisonment of people for trade union activities or use of forced labor," said Joaquin Otero, deputy undersecretary of labor.

"There are many standards that can be adopted without causing any damage to the competitive advantage that developing countries have," he said.

Kirkland's U.S.-EU free trade idea finds favor

Why doesn't the United States pick on someone its own size and strike up a "free trade" deal with the European Community instead of picking out low-wage nations U.S. investors can exploit?

Why not, indeed, asked British Prime Minister John Major during an April state visit, prompting a U.S. State Department spokesman to describe a U.S.-EU free trade pact as "an idea whose time hasn't come." A Europe magazine forum discussed the idea and wire services credited the idea to AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland.

Kirkland posed the question in the Washington Post in May 1993, five months before passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement. If it were North Atlantic instead of North American, Kirkland said, it would be a NAFTA worth supporting.

"It would tie us to countries with high wages, strong consumer purchasing power and high standards of living," Kirkland said. "It would also enable American workers to benefit from a European Social Charter that sets standards in vocational training, equal pay for equal work, freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining."

Labor abuses may haunt trade summit

By James B. Parks

Issues of worker rights will be laid squarely before American hemispheric leaders June 28-29 in Denver, where a labor summit will precede the meeting of trade ministers who hope to lay the groundwork for a free trade agreement for the Americas.

Those ministers will be confronted with the abuse of workers that goes on each day in many American countries, such as El Salvador, where Julia Quintanilla died under suspicious circumstances.

"The Denver meeting will provide an opportunity for the trade ministers to do something for the Quintanillas of this hemisphere, so that firms will no longer be able to blackmail governments into non-enforcement of their own labor and health and safety laws. But will they act?" asked William C. Doherty, executive director of the AFL-CIO's American Institute for Free Labor Development.

Julia Quintanilla

Quintanilla, 25, a Salvadoran maquila worker, union activist and single mother, died March 2 after she developed severe stomach pains at work. In apparent reprisal for her union activity, she was refused permission to go to a doctor.

She worked 10- to 12-hour days in a clothing factory near San Salvador, sewing shirts in a Korean-owned factory in the San Marcos "free zone" maquila for the equivalent of $80 per month. With that, she supported herself, her seven-month-old baby and nine other relatives, including her 95-year-old great-grandmother and her 61-year-old mother.

At midday on March 1, too ill to work, Quintanilla went home. That evening she went to a government health clinic, but she was refused treatment because the company had not paid its legally required social security taxes, even though it had deducted them in part from workers' paychecks. Later that night, her family took her to a poorly-equipped municipal hospital where she died early the next morning from complications of severe gastroenteritis.

Sixteen of her co-workers who had helped form a union were fired after they attended her funeral, an action prohibited by their employer. The women were reinstated after strong protests from the international labor movement. AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland wrote Salvadoran President Calderon Sol demanding that the workers be reinstated and that El Salvador enforce its labor laws.

"Unfortunately, cheating on social security payments is an all-too-common practice among the fiercely competitive export firms in El Salvador," Doherty said. "The day after Julia's death, the government admitted that at least 10 other maquila companies had failed to pay their social security taxes and that their workers lacked health coverage — 10 out of 23 in the free zones."

After Quintanilla's death, Salvadoran business associations launched a campaign against "unpatriotic" union agitators they claim were bent on violent takeovers of plants. Police began arresting union leaders and attacking striking female workers in other maquila plants. Sol announced that his government would launch an investigation — not of labor code violations by foreign firms, but of an alleged conspiracy by U.S. unions to finance "destabilization" of the maquilas.

"When they meet in Denver, the architects of hemispheric economic integration could change this dynamic," Doherty said. "Instead of fortifying a global economic system of cut-throat competition, they could decide to cooperate with each other to raise labor standards and working conditions.

''They could challenge the famous brand-name corporations which buy products from the maquila factories — as Crystal Sportswear, Sun Sportswear and Marshalls did from the factory where Quintanilla worked — to establish codes of conduct that would favor suppliers who obey the law and treat their employees with respect," he said.

AIFLD has donated $4,000 to Quintanilla's relatives to help care for the young woman's baby. The donation came from AIFLD's Hammer-Pearlman-Viera Memorial Fund, established in the name of the Salvadoran labor leader and two AIFLD staff members who were killed by Salvadoran death squads in 1981.

El Salvador was among three countries cited April 6 by the International Labor Organization for worker rights violations. The ILO called on the three countries — El Salvador, Peru and Indonesia — to investigate unsolved crimes against trade unionists and enforce fundamental worker rights.

The complaints against El Salvador include the assassinations last year of Meriberto Galicia Sanchez and Pedro Constanza of the national sugar industry union.

AFL-CIO NEWS

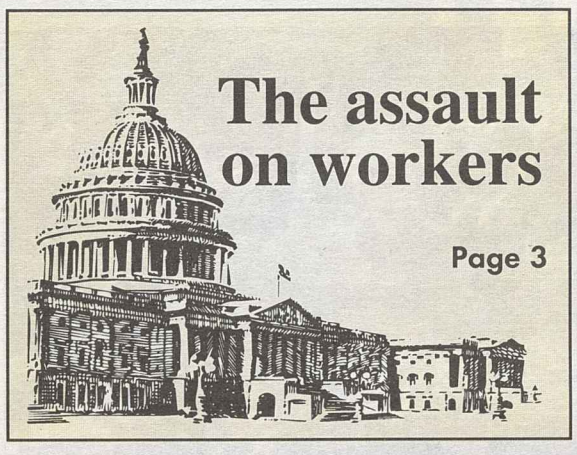
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The assault on workers

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AFL-CIO NEWS

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Steve Clem/URW photo

Worldwide rubber union leaders from 22 countries join a Rubber Workers delegation headed by President Kenneth L. Coss in a show of solidarity at the Turkish Bridgestone plant outside Izmit. The April 12 event followed the ICEF World Conference for the Rubber Industry in Istanbul.

World unions to press Bridgestone

By Michael Byrne

Rubber union leaders from 22 countries condemned Bridgestone/Firestone for its union-busting tactics in the United States, vowing to bring pressure on the world's largest tire manufacturer at its plants around the world.

The Japan-based multinational "faces growing international isolation over its refusal to bargain in good faith with its American workers," the International Federation of Chemical, Energy and General Workers Unions said after the meeting of its rubber industry section.

The meeting in Istanbul April 10-12 was convened by Rubber Workers President Kenneth Coss, who was unanimously re-elected president of the group.

Unions everywhere are united in their "outrage over the reprehensible violation of international norms of behavior in labor-management relations by this rogue multinational company," Coss told the gathering.

The URW has been on strike against four U.S. Bridgestone plants since last June after the company demanded a rash of concessions. The company has told the union its members have been "permanently replaced."

Coss told the AFL-CIO Executive Council in February that Bridgestone had approached all the major tire makers in 1994 with a proposal to bust the union through concerted action in a "War of '94." But all the other companies settled with the union, including Pirelli Armstrong after a prolonged unfair labor practice strike.

Bridgestone's resort to strikebreakers brought a protest from President Clinton, who accused the company of "flagrantly turning its back on our tradition of peaceful collective bargaining to solve labor disputes."

Clinton has since issued an executive order banning federal contracts of more than $100,000 with any company that attempts to permanently replace striking workers. Bridgestone has challenged that order in court, along with a number of employer associations.

Accompanying Coss at the meeting in Turkey was Roger Gates, president of URW Local 713 in Decatur, Ill., who eloquently testified before Congress April 5 in defense of Clinton's executive order. Also attending was Steve Clem, URW's research and international affairs director, and Richard Yeselson, director of special projects for the AFL-CIO Industrial Union Department.

"Bridgestone clearly has developed different relations with unions from country to country," Yeselson

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Labor demands safety and health job protections

Unionists will Stand UP on Workers Memorial Day

By Colleen M. O'Neill

Workers are taking the fight of their lives to the hustings, rallying against a congressional assault on job safety laws.

That's the message being carried forth April 28 in Workers Memorial Day gatherings across the nation. Trade unionists are reminding the nation of the days when going to work for a living too often meant dying for a living.

The campaign refutes the claims by the new Republican leadership in Congress, which has sought to tear down vital protections for American workers — claiming the federal government should have no role in protecting workers.

The job fatality rate has been cut in half and 140,000 lives have been saved since 1970, the year the Occupational Safety and Health Act was passed. In industries where OSHA has concentrated its efforts — manufacturing and construction — fatality rates and injury rates have decreased significantly.

Likewise, exposures to such hazards as asbestos, lead, cotton dust and benzene have been reduced dramatically, thanks in large part to strong OSHA standards and enforcement.

However, much still needs improvement. More than 6,000 workers are killed each year by workplace injuries and more than 50,000 die from occupational diseases. Last year, more than 6.7 million workers suffered workplace injuries.

A report prepared by the AFL-CIO Department of Occupational Safety and Health outlines the continuing problems: "The magnitude and effectiveness of OSHA inspections continue to be inadequate; millions of public employees remain unprotected by health and safety standards; and average penalties are so meager that they fail to effectively deter employers from violating the law."

Yet some Republicans in Congress seek to roll back protections through a series of legislative measures designed to turn OSHA into a consulting agency with no enforcement teeth, making workers' lives an expendable cost of doing business.

Such measures include budget cutbacks for OSHA and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and

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Clinton pledges initiatives to boost working women

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

President Clinton endorsed and sent to Capitol Hill 14 recommendations for improving the lot of working women, including several aspects of his core program for assisting working families — raising the minimum wage and improving access to job training and higher education.

Other recommendations include eliminating wage discrimination among federal contractors via new reporting requirements, establishing child care partnerships and recognizing employers who make the workplace better for women.

The recommendations, based on a nationwide survey of 250,000 working women by the Department of Labor's Women's Bureau, were presented to Clinton at an April 10 White House ceremony. The president pledged his administration would do its part in helping American families cope with change.

"It is in our interest over the long run to take advantage of all these rapid changes going on in our society and still allow people to have some stability, some order, some pace in their lives so that they can raise their children and honor their marriage and grow as people at work and after work," he said.

"The federal government has a role to play in addressing women's concerns, as do business, labor, community organizations and the media," Clinton said. "This administration intends to do its part."

Among those attending the ceremony was AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue, who said the recommendations "would help working women achieve equal pay and alleviate the stress of balancing work and family."

The best way for women to improve themselves economically, Donahue added, is "to join a union." In 1994, the median weekly earnings for female union members were $522, compared with $377 for non-union women.

But in 1993, women only earned 71 cents for every dollar earned by a man. AFL-CIO affiliates have been aggressively organizing in female-dominated

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IBT photo

Teamsters "Rally for Fairness" outside an Overnite Transportation Co. terminal in Memphis, Tenn., assailing the anti-union tactics of the company during an ongoing organizing drive. The National Labor Relations Board has issued a number of unfair labor practice complaints against Overnite, and has sought a bargaining order at the company's Bensalem, Pa., and suburban St. Louis terminals, where a majority of workers who supported the union were victimized by illegal threats from the company. NLRB regional directors have found 12 violations against Overnite officials, citing more than 150 separate illegal acts during the 46-terminal organizing drive. The union thus far has won 14 representation elections for about 1,500 workers, including one most recently in Atlanta.

BARGAINING

Grocery workers return

Some 32,000 Food and Commercial Workers at three northern California grocery chains are back on the job with a proposed settlement that maintains health care and other benefits.

Members of 11 UFCW locals at 405 Safeway, Lucky and Save Mart food stores were involved in the disputes. Some 18,000 Safeway workers walked off the job April 6 after negotiations broke off over management giveback demands. Another 14,000 workers at Lucky and Save Mart stores were locked out April 7.

The proposed agreement, which "rolls over" the current contract for three years, will be sent to the membership for ratification.

UFCW members won considerable community support during the nine-day work stoppage, with most customers avoiding the stores and even some managers taking up the workers' cause, the union said.

UFCW is continuing negotiations with the Albertson's chain, and another chain, Radley's, has said it would accept the terms agreed to in the contract with the three lead chains.

8,500 janitors get justice

Service Employees Local 399 negotiated new five-year contracts with 21 Los Angeles cleaning companies, covering some 8,500 cleaning service workers.

Under the new agreement, workers in the three lowest tiers will be brought up to the first-tier wage rate of $6.80 per hour over the next five years and will be given full health and welfare benefits. Those already at that rate will gain an additional $1 per hour.

The contract also includes improvements in health insurance and new language on seniority and layoffs. As a result of SEIU's Justice for Janitors campaign that began eight years ago, now 90 percent of the city's office buildings are cleaned by union cleaning companies.

Congress finds home fires burning

Workers use recess to counter GOP 'Contract'

By Candice Johnson

The so-called "Contract with America" is the wrong direction for this country, union members are telling their congressional representatives this Easter recess.

That message is being delivered in face-to-face meetings, phone calls, rallies, radio talk shows and newspaper and television ads. The AFL-CIO's Stand UP for America's Working Families campaign stresses that good jobs, good wages, health and safety and a real voice on the job are among workers' top priorities.

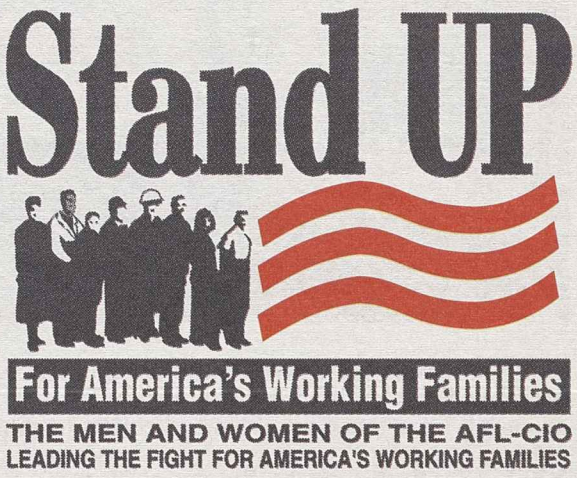
Workers Memorial Day on April 28, the final day of the House recess, offers a perfect opportunity to send the message. (**See story, Page 1, and partial list of activities, Page 8**).

The AFL-CIO's television ads began in the Washington area April 2 and moved out to key congressional districts in the next two weeks, appearing in six states just as members of Congress returned home for the recess.

Newspaper ads, which appeared in the national edition of USA Today and in the Washington Post, also are appearing in several districts. Print ads in Erie and State College, Pa., carried the tag, "brought to you by the women and men of the ILGWU," while the Communications Workers placed a print ad in Paducah, Ky.

Ohio union members have been leafleting daily outside the Columbus office of House Budget Committee Chairman John R. Kasich, a key member of the GOP leadership team.

Kasich has voted against working families on all of the issues the AFL-CIO has monitored in the first 100 days, including the measure to slash millions from the 1995 Occupational Safety and Health Administration budget. In so doing, Columbus AFL-CIO Executive Secretary-Treasurer William Rittenhouse said, Kasich and other House Republicans "are playing games with the lives of workers."



Arkansas Food and Commercial Workers have planned a march to the office of Rep. Jay Dickey (R), in whose district the campaign's "Stand UP" television ads are running.

In Pennsylvania, LAC meetings have been scheduled with six members, including GOP Rep. Philip S. English. Ads have been running in English's district, and in the district of GOP Rep. William F. Clinger Jr., who so far has refused meetings.

Union retirees, including members of AFSCME, UFCW and the Letter Carriers, are coordinating activities and are calling retired members in Pennsylvania with the Stand UP message. Other statewide activities include leafleting at plant gates and calls to senators and representatives.

Retirees in Kentucky are planning activities in Henderson, the congressional district of Rep. Edward Whitfield (R), where the television ads are on the air.

Wisconsin union members will join three town hall meetings scheduled by Rep. Mark Neumann (R). Two direct-mail campaigns also are under way, aimed at union members in districts represented by Reps. Harris W. Fawell (R-Ill.) and Cass Ballenger (R-N.C.).

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Director of Information: Rex Hardesty

Editor: Michael Byrne

Assistant Editors: Candice Johnson, David Kameras, James B. Parks

Staff Writers: Muriel H. Cooper, Mike Hall Colleen M. O'Neill, Sharolyn A. Rosier

Graphics/Layout: Stan Hitt, Hindi M. Fracasse

AFL-CIO Headquarters: 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006
Telephone: (202) 637-5010
CompuServe: 76004, 3601

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CAPITOL DIGEST

Basic labor laws face harsh attack

By Mike Hall

During its first 100 days, the Republican-controlled House has laid some dangerous groundwork with very grave implications for labor and working families. The GOP leadership has made it clear that a big part of its real agenda is to dismantle core labor laws.

The House tax bill, the assault on workplace safety in various House bills and the rescissions package all are proof that many members of this Congress are marching to a tune played by their friends in corporate board rooms.

After the April recess, the FY 1996 budget process will begin, and the Republicans plan to use it to slash funding and paralyze what they may be unable to outright kill or repeal.

A look at a list of their targets for the rest of the year gives a hint of what working families will face in the ensuing months.

Following is a brief rundown on the status of several pieces of major legislation of concern to the AFL-CIO.

Balanced Budget — H.J. Res. 1, opposed by the AFL-CIO, gained the two-thirds majority necessary for a constitutional amendment in the House Jan. 26. But a filibuster against the resolution Feb. 10 was successful when a cloture vote failed.

Company Unions/TEAM Act — H.R. 743 was reported by the House Employer/Employee Relations Subcommittee March 7. The Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee held hearings Feb. 9 and more are expected before further action. The AFL-CIO opposes the bill.

Davis-Bacon Repeal — H.R. 500 was reported by the House Work Force Protections Subcommittee March 2. It now goes before the full Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee. S. 141 was approved by the full Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee March 29. Both are opposed by the AFL-CIO.

Fair Labor Standards Act — The House Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee has begun a series of hearings on the FLSA, which is the cornerstone of the 40-hour week, overtime standards and other vital workplace protections.

Minimum Wage — Supported by the AFL-CIO, H.R. 940 has been referred to the House Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee, where hearings are continuing, and S. 413 was sent to the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee.

OSHA — There are several bills opposed by the AFL-CIO relating to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and issues of workplace safety, which the Republicans are hiding behind the banner of "regulatory reform:"

- H.R. 450 would establish a moratorium on all new and some existing regulations on the workplace, and on public and environmental health and safety. It passed the House Feb. 24. The Senate version, S. 219, was modified to eliminate the moratorium but it establishes broad new congressional powers that could halt new safety standards. It passed the Senate March 29. Both bills now go to conference.
- The House passed its version of risk assessment/cost benefit analysis legislation Feb. 28 as part of H.R. 9. The Senate bill, S. 343, was reported by the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee April 4.
- Two so-called OSHA "reform" bills were designed to gut the agency. H.R. 707 was referred to the Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee and S. 592 to the Labor and Human Resources Committee.

Rescissions — H.R. 1158, opposed by the AFL-CIO, would rescind previously approved funds for FY 1995. Most of the cuts are aimed at education, the Department of Labor, jobs and job training programs, housing and the elderly. The House and Senate passed the bill, which now goes to conference.

Service Contract Act Repeal — H.R. 246, opposed by the AFL-CIO, was reported by the House Work Force Protections Subcommittee March 2.

Striker Replacement — The House rescissions bill, H.R. 1158, contains a provision that in effect would overturn President Clinton's executive order barring the government from doing business with companies that use permanent replacement workers. It is not expected to be added to the Senate version, although Senate Republicans unsuccessfully tried to attach a similar provision to a supplemental Defense Department appropriations bill.

The filibuster against the amendment was successful when cloture failed March 15. House Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee Chairman William Goodling (R-Pa.) held a hearing April 5 on his bill, H.R. 1176, to overturn the executive order.

Taxes — House Republicans passed their $189 billion tax break package, with most benefits going to the wealthy and businesses. The bill, H.R. 1327, also includes a spending cut package aimed at kids, schools, the elderly and labor to pay for the tax cuts. It is opposed by the AFL-CIO.

Welfare Reform — The House Republican welfare reform bill, H.R. 4, would allow displacement of current public- and private-sector workers by creating a subminimum wage work force of welfare/workfare recipients. It does nothing to address job training and job creation. H.R. 4, opposed by the AFL-CIO, passed the House March 24.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Robert A. Georgine, president of the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department, addresses about 1,000 unionists who rallied on Capitol Hill April 4 to express their opposition to Republican proposals to repeal the nation's basic prevailing wage law in construction, the Davis-Bacon Act.

Labor will be well represented at conference on aging

By Colleen M. O'Neill

Trade unionists are poised to play a major role in the historic fourth White House Conference on Aging, the first in 14 years.

More than 200 of the expected 2,200 delegates to the May 2-5 conference will have ties to organized labor, planners said. The Washington event will focus on such issues as comprehensive long-term health care, economic security, housing and support services and quality of life.

The conference — "America Now and Into the 21st Century: Generations Aging Together with Independence, Opportunity and Dignity" — comes at a time of many important milestones for the country's older population. It will mark the 60th anniversary of Social Security and the 30th anniversaries of the Older Americans Act, Medicare, Medicaid and the Foster Grandparent Program.

President Clinton is slated to give the opening address, with First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala and Sen. David Pryor (D-Ark.), chairman of the White House Council on Aging Policy Committee, all expected to participate.

Delegates are chosen by governors, members of Congress, national aging organizations, veterans' organizations, youth organizations and others, with many union retirees selected to attend, Machinists President George Kourpias told the AFL-CIO Executive Council in February.

The federation is engaging in an effort to form and affiliate retiree councils with state AFL-CIOs to help concentrate the power of seniors, he said. That effort is paying off in many of the federation's outreach programs, such as the Stand UP campaign, which benefit from the experience and expertise of union retirees.

The power of seniors is growing each year, statistics show, as life expectancy increases and the Baby Boom generation ages. The demographics of the nation are shifting such that older Americans will represent fully 20 percent of the nation's population by 2030.

"The Nation and its Older People" was the theme of the first conference in 1961. The work of the 2,500 delegates contributed to the enactment of Medicare, Medicaid and the Older Americans Act.

The second conference met in 1971 under the theme "Toward a National Policy on Aging." The 710 recommendations produced by that conference contributed to the Supplemental Security Income Program, the Older Americans Act Nutrition Program, home care and the National Institute of Aging, as well as the House Select Committee on Aging.

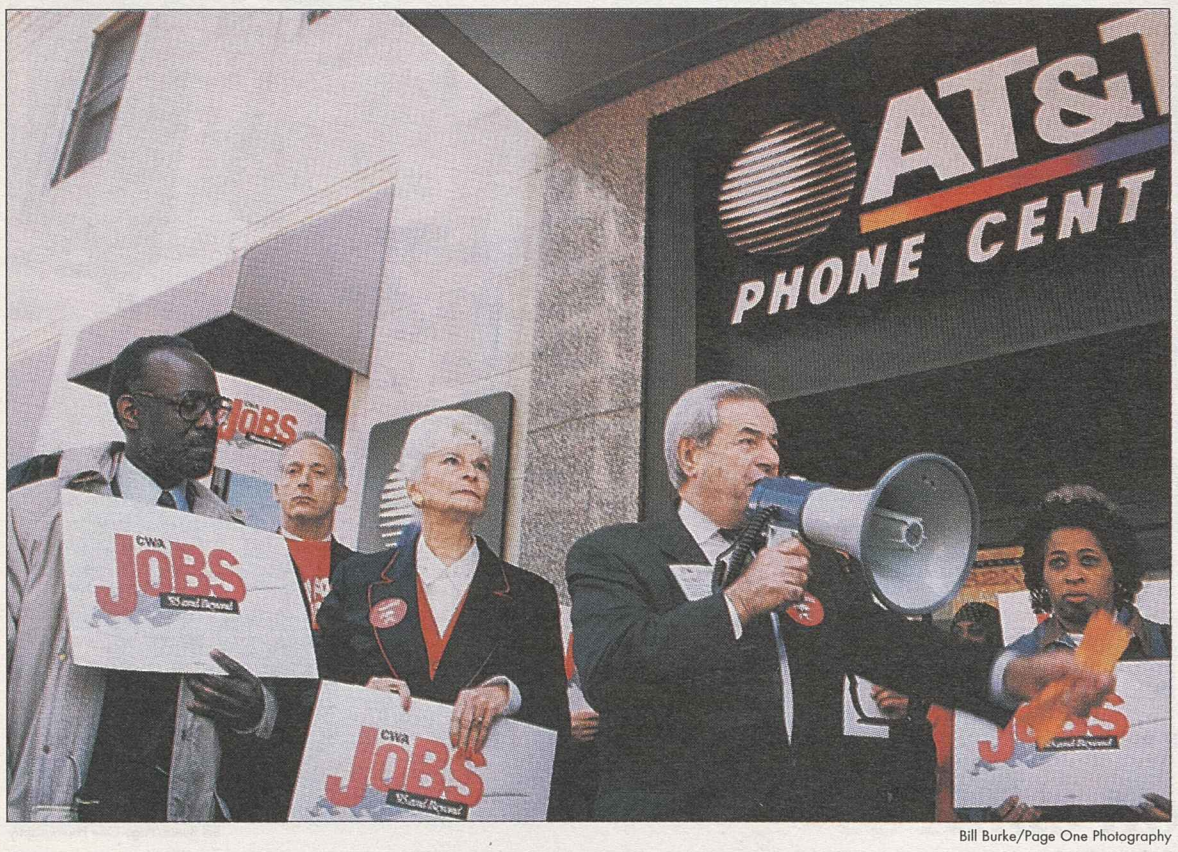
Nearly 1,800 delegates met in 1981 and produced 663 recommendations, which led to the comprehensive Social Security Reform amendments of 1983.

The challenge before delegates in 1995 is to develop ways to foster intergenerational ties while ensuring the availability of adequate resources to meet the needs of the nation's aging population.

More than 20,000 individuals have participated in smaller conferences and many local, state and regional events held over the past few months leading up to the Washington conference.

Interested individuals may participate at 10 regional sites that will be receiving conference broadcasts via teleconferencing.

Those sites are: Rhode Island Convention Center, Providence; Hunter College, New York City; Convention Center, Pittsburgh; Radisson Twin Towers, Orlando, Fla.; INFOMART, Dallas; University of Arkansas, Little Rock; University of California at Los Angeles; San Diego Convention Center; California Exposition, Sacramento; and John Knox Center, Kansas City, Mo.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Communications Workers President Morton Bahr rallies unionists outside an AT&T center in Washington April 3 during the union's legislative conference. Events were held that day in several cities as contract talks got under way with the communications giant. CWA and the Electrical Workers represent some 110,000 AT&T workers in agreements that expire May 27. With Bahr are CWA Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling and Joslyn N. Williams, president of the Metropolitan Washington AFL-CIO.

Transit workers in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh roll

Trouble brewing for N.Y. school bus drivers

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

Philadelphia and Pittsburgh transit workers have ratified contracts, but school bus drivers in New York ran into Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, who was demanding heavy concessions.

The Philadelphia workers, represented by Transport Workers Local 234, ended a two-week strike April 10 after 90 percent of the 5,500 workers ratified a new contract with the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority.

The settlement gives transit workers 3 percent raises each year, along with improved pension benefits and sick pay. Their base pay now ranges from $22,500 for janitors to $33,500 for subway operators.

The work stoppage began March 28 with a walkout by bus, trolley, subway and elevated rail operators, as well as maintenance workers and mechanics in the transit agency's City Division, after a two-week contract extension ended without a settlement. The strike was the first transit shutdown since 1986.

The strike expanded April 2 to suburban transit workers who are represented by United Transportation Union Local 1594 and TWU Local 234. UTU Local 1594 drivers are working under the terms of their expired contract while negotiations continue.

The 2,600 transit workers in Pittsburgh ratified a three-year contract with the Port Authority of Allegheny County that provides general wage increases totaling 33 cents an hour and cost-of-living raises of up to $1.25 an hour over the term.

The agreement, which is retroactive to Dec. 1, 1994, and will expire Nov. 30, 1997, was ratified by Amalgamated Transit Workers Union Local 85. It covers bus and trolley operators, maintenance workers and clerical staff employed by the PAT.

The Pittsburgh agreement offers across-the-board raises of 11 cents an hour retroactive to March 1, 12 cents an hour effective Jan. 1, 1996, and 10 cents an hour beginning Jan. 1, 1997. Additional quarterly pay increases, which are calculated according to a pay formula that takes into account the rate of inflation, are capped at a total of 40 cents an hour in each of the first two years and 45 cents in the final year.

The March cost-of-living adjustment was 10 cents an hour.

The contract also included increased pension benefits for workers who retired prior to Dec. 1, 1991, and an agreement on how to develop a contract for newly unionized supervisory employees.

Meanwhile, in New York City, Mayor Giuliani has employed particularly unsavory tactics — asking city workers to "volunteer" to act as strike breakers if city school bus drivers use their legal right to strike.

"This request is outrageous," said Carl Haynes, president of Teamsters Local 237, which represents the drivers. "These city bus drivers have tenure and now they are putting their jobs out for bid."

The bus drivers' contract was set to expire April 24.

Sprint, Ampad among 'Dirty Dozen'

By Muriel H. Cooper

Hundreds of union workers lost their jobs as a result of the cut-and-run tactics of this year's "Dirty Dozen."

The list, compiled by the Federation for Industrial Retention and Renewal, puts the spotlight on union busters and runaway plants, as well as unscrupulous operators and violators of the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act.

Among the bad actors is Sprint, which closed down its La Conexion Familiar office in San Francisco, laying off 235 Latino telemarketers one week before a vote for representation by the Communications Workers.

The Paperworkers nominated Ampad Corp. in Marion, Ind., for provoking a strike involving more than 200 workers and then closing the plant several months later. Ampad is a subsidiary of Bain Capital, whose CEO, Mitt Romney, lost his senatorial campaign against Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) after Ampad strikers called attention to his labor record.

"There is a need for better legislation to protect communities and working people from the devastating effects of job loss and economic upheaval," said Jim Benn, FIRR's executive director. FIRR is a network of community groups that monitors industrial job loss and advocates government policies for high-wage jobs.

U.S.-based multinational corporations have little trepidation about running away from U.S. communities, noted John Cavanaugh, co-author of Global Dreams: Imperial Corporations and the New World Order.

"The kinds of corporate blackmail and plant shutdowns that we warned would result from NAFTA have occurred, and tens of thousands of workers, both non-unionized and unionized, have been victims," he noted.

Among the runaway employers making the Dirty Dozen list was Mattel, Inc./Fisher-Price, which shut down a division of Fisher-Price in Medina, N.Y., eliminating 700 jobs even after record sales of $2.7 billion.

Mattel had rebuffed a 1994 Machinists organizing drive in Medina by telling workers their jobs were secure. A few months later, Mattel let all the workers go. The company is a major employer of low-wage foreign workers, many of whom make Barbie dolls for as little as 12 cents an hour. In 1993, 184 workers died in a Thailand factory fire where Mattel toys were produced.

Cooper Industries, headquartered in Houston, was selected for its pattern of acquiring companies with excess capacity and unionized work forces and then closing them.

Athletic Helmet in Knoxville, Tenn., was throwing beanballs at its workers, negotiating a new contract even as it was quietly making plans to move the plant at government expense.

The Teamsters nominated Churchill Trucking of Chillicothe, Mo., for closing even after 1,100 workers made contract concessions to help the company.

The National Standard Corp. shut down its plant in Columbiana, Ala., where two Steelworkers, Keith Cain and Walter Fleming, were killed while picketing when a scab driver ran them down.

Other companies on the list included the Wior Co., Los Angeles; The Carlow family, Pittsburgh; Matsushita Television Co., Franklin Park, Ill.; Victor Posner-Riviera Cabinets, Red Wing, Minn.; and Woolrich, Inc., in Avis and Blanchard, Pa., and Broomfield, Colo.

NLRB seeks regional solution to Beverly homes case backlog

The National Labor Relations Board is seeking to speed up the resolution of hundreds of unfair labor practice cases against anti-union Beverly Health and Rehabilitative Services by handling recent and future complaints at the regional level.

The nation's largest nursing home chain, formerly known as Beverly Enterprises, already has put through a legal wringer an NLRB order to cease and desist its illegal practices and to notify employees of the board finding through a work-area posting. Two other pending nationwide unfair labor practice complaints also are expected to take a long time to resolve.

"In the interim," the board said, "it is important to permit the efficient and timely resolution of new cases that are now pending or may arise."

Under the agreement, regional NLRB offices will be encouraged to settle recent complaints that have not gone to trial and any future complaints issued by the board. Cases that cannot be settled will be tried by the regional offices.

The first complaint is a good example of how long the nationwide cases can drag on. The NLRB in January 1993 issued a nationwide cease-and-desist and posting order against Beverly, based on unfair labor practice charges brought by five unions — Service Employees, UAW, Communications Workers, Food and Commercial Workers and Steelworkers. The NLRB found more than 130 unfair labor practices at 33 facilities, primarily during organizing drives.

But a federal appeals court refused to enforce the order and sent the case back to the board. On March 29, more than two years later, the board decided to reissue the order for three of the 33 homes and to narrow it to cover actions at the other 30 homes.

Meanwhile, an administrative law judge in July 1994 recommended that another nationwide cease-and-desist order be issued covering unfair labor practices at 20 different nursing homes not included in the original order. That case is still pending.

Almost union, shipyard workers face new tests

By David Kameras

Shipyard workers at Avondale Industries Inc. are a step closer to securing union protection after a National Labor Relations Board hearing officer reinstated 577 challenged ballots from a June 1993 representation election.

Of those ballots ordered opened and counted, only 19 "yes" votes are needed to put the Metal Trades Council into the workplace.

Still, workers aren't quite ready to break out the champagne. Union attorney Bill Lurye cautioned that while the "outcome of the election is a foregone conclusion now," Avondale will likely keep finding ways to delay labor's access to collective bargaining.

The workers aren't standing still waiting for developments. With the help of several unions, they are undertaking a corporate campaign to bring pressure from shareholders and federal agencies — from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to the U.S. Navy.

Workers who belong to the troubled Avondale Employee Stock Ownership Plan and other investors are working to tender proxies for shareholder resolutions that would make a number of changes to the company's by-laws.

CEO Al Bossier, who controls the trustees of the ESOP, is asking the Securities and Exchange Commission to disqualify the union proxy drive.

"Bossier's tactics may produce short-term profits, but in the long run a company like Avondale cannot continue to operate without regard for the concerns or welfare of its work force," said Ed Durkin of the Carpenters, who is coordinating the proxy campaign. "Those investors who see the dangers inherent in the way Avondale operates are likely to come to our side in this fight."

The shareholders meeting is set for April 28, Workers Memorial Day, an appropriate date considering the ongoing concerns about worker safety and compensation at the south Louisiana facility.

In order to be the low bidder for lucrative Navy contracts, management pays its employees substandard wages and benefits, forcing some production workers into federally subsidized housing and out of a high-cost health insurance plan.

Avondale also has made its employees cannon fodder in its battle to win contracts by cutting corners on safety, workers charge.

OSHA last year investigated 258 safety incidents brought to its attention by shipyard workers. But while 82 violations were determined, Avondale had its wrist slapped with a modest $70,000 fine.

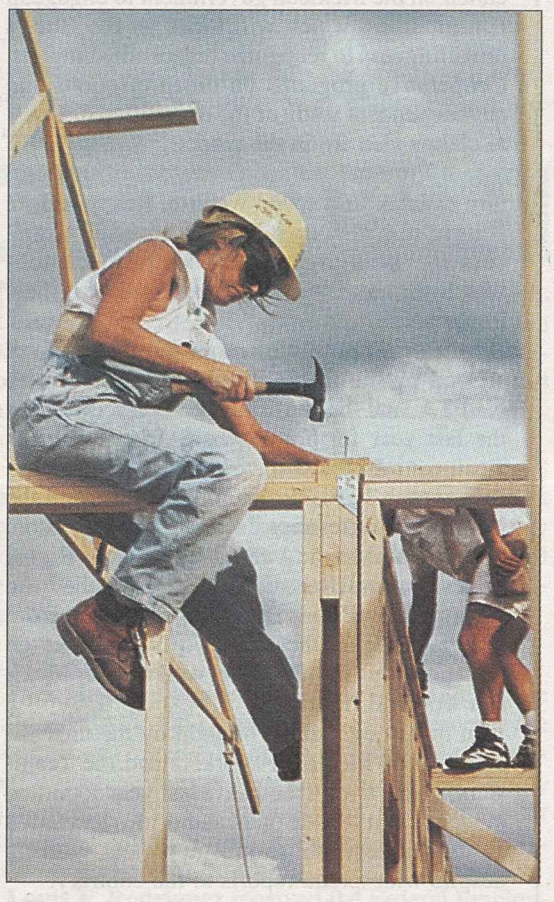
The shipyard then sought to fire three members of the safety committee in what is seen by the union as "blatant" retaliation.

Days after OSHA closed its inquiry, Lionel Duckett, a 37-year-old father of four, fell 18 feet to a steel deck and was left dying for more than 45 minutes before help arrived. It was the fourth fatal fall in 15 months, and the 32nd fatality since 1972.

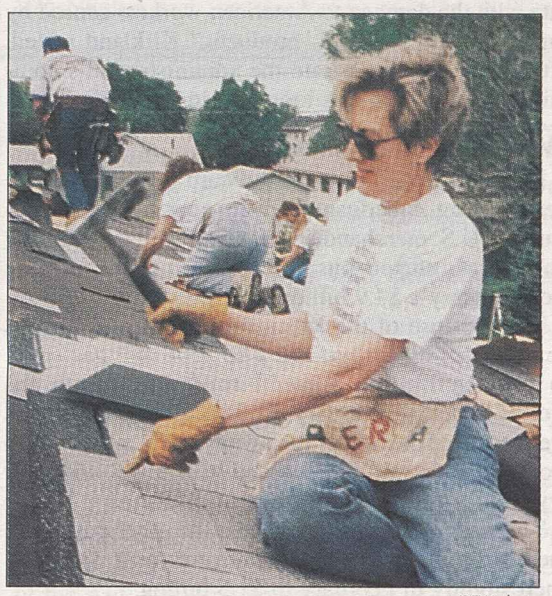
In a letter to Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich, Carpenters President Sigurd Lucassen complained of lax inspections by OSHA's Baton Rouge office and inadequate subsequent penalties.

"The evidence demands prompt action," he said. "Workers are killed at Avondale at an alarming rate and OSHA consistently refuses to take appropriate action to ensure their safety in the workplace. No whitewash will cover the cost of human lives and suffering allowed to continue at this workplace."

Phil Miller, a Plumbers and Pipefitters representative who has spent the last two years coordinating the organizing drive, added, "We don't believe the Navy wants to buy ships smeared with the blood of workers who built them."



Women build community service



IBEW photos

IBEW Local 640 member Pandora Moore connects two wood joints, left, in a Habitat for Humanity project in Phoenix, Ariz. Former U.S. Rep. Karen Shepherd, above, was working on the roof of a project in Salt Lake City.

Unions boost 'Humanity' projects

These are the houses that Kathy and Manya and Karen and Phoebe and Queue and Julie and Phyllis and Kimberly built — for free.

Like other building trades unionists around the country, these Electrical Workers were pitching in for Habitat for Humanity Inc., a non-profit organization that involves volunteer efforts to build homes for the working poor.

The female members of IBEW Local 354 had built this house in Salt Lake City — a three-bedroom, two-bathroom model. And members of IBEW Locals 640 and 266, both women and men, built a four-bedroom, two-bathroom stucco house in Phoenix, Ariz.

"The opportunity to contribute to our community and help those less fortunate was our biggest reward," said Julie LeRoy, business manager for IBEW Local 354.

The union women roughed in the panel and boxes for lights, switches, outlets and smoke detectors. They pulled the romex between boxes and made up all of the joints. They also installed the meter main and grounding system.

"These women have done mostly commercial and industrial work," said LeRoy. "A little residential project like this one in Salt Lake City was educational as well as a change of pace for all the women."

The AFL-CIO's Community Services Department and Habitat set up a pilot project last year to encourage skilled unionists to volunteer their time and talents to build homes in their communities.

"We wanted to recruit and involve skilled carpenters, electricians, plumbers and bricklayers in training Habitat volunteers in basic construction skills," said Department Director Green Lewis.

The initial pilot project was launched in 17 cities. However, the need for affordable, quality-built family homes convinced central labor councils and community service liaisons to expanded the effort to 10 additional cities.

Among the Habitat for Humanity projects was one built by union members in Washington state, which this week will be acknowledged by President Clinton when representatives from the District Council of Carpenters for Seattle and North Puget Sound receive a 1995 President's Service Award.

The Carpenters worked along with some 100 volunteer apprentices and journeymen from the IBEW, Roofers, Lathers, Painters and Plumbers and Pipefitters to construct a home displayed at the Seattle Home Show, and then disassembled and moved to the Habitat site.

IBEW members have been involved in several Habitat projects, which "has a good track record," said Terry Miller, business manager for IBEW Local 266 in Phoenix.

As long as Habitat provides the money needed for material, the union will provide the labor, he said. "Our members are always looking to learn new construction skills. We had about 50 workers every Saturday. Everybody was eager to work."

— **Muriel H. Cooper**

Pilots, Machinists tentatively OK airline contracts

After tough negotiations, workers at two major airlines have secured new contracts.

The Air Line Pilots have reached a tentative agreement with America West Airlines nearly one-and-a-half years after the carrier's cockpit crews voted for union representation.

The Machinists, meanwhile, reached a tentative four-year agreement with Alaska Airlines, bringing to an end talks that had gone on between the two sides since September 1992.

The ALPA collective bargaining pact is the first for America West's 1,027 pilots.

While details of the five-year agreement will not be released until after ratification by the pilots and approval by the company's board of directors, Jim McCartney, who chairs ALPA's negotiating committee, characterized it as "very good for the pilots and the company."

"There are substantial economic gains for the pilots, and we have given substantial efficiencies back to the company," he said.

In an October 1993 election supervised by the National Mediation Board, the pilots became the first group of workers at America West to unionize. Last summer, the Flight Attendants also registered an election win at the airline.

Meanwhile, more than 2,000 clerical, office and passenger service workers represented by the Machinists have reached agreement with Alaska Airlines.

"This agreement enhances our members' job security, and also helps to ensure the long-term viability of the carrier," said IAM District 143 President Marvin E. Sandrin.

Tom Trotter, a spokesman for District 143, said the pact will provide "significant work-rule improvements and economic improvements."

Earlier, the parties had rejected an offer by the National Mediation Board to arbitrate the dispute, thereby triggering a 30-day cooling-off period that could have resulted in a strike as early as May 13.

In another dispute, however, mediation is being sought by Delta Air Lines with ALPA, a move the union described as premature.

With only six months into formal negotiations and one counter-proposal each, "We feel that negotiations are really still in the initial stages," said ALPA spokewoman Karen McGuffey.

The union has proposed ways to reduce the airline's costs by $340 million, but is insisting on common stock and a board seat in return, moves the company says "are not even a possibility," she said.

"We want to be treated fairly in return for our investment," McGuffey said. "We want value for value."

With or without mediation, ALPA said it plans to continue good-faith bargaining at Delta.

— **David Kameras**

Japan resists efforts to open auto market

Labor supports pact guaranteeing results

By David Kameras

Trade talks with Japan collapsed after the United States insisted that Japan move to break down the barriers that keep out U.S. automobiles and auto parts.

Those Japanese trade barriers have contributed to a burgeoning U.S. trade deficit that reached record proportions last year. The Clinton administration has pursued a "results-oriented" trade policy with Japan, an approach supported by the AFL-CIO.

U.S. negotiators spent much of last week in Washington with their counterparts trying to pry open Japan's highly restrictive marketplace and give its consumers greater access to American-made products.

"Year after year, U.S. auto workers have waited for the massive U.S. automotive trade deficit with Japan to shrink," said UAW President Owen Bieber. "Instead, the imbalance has only worsened, setting a new record of $37 billion last year.

"The continuing deficit not only undermines the job security of current workers — it also reduces job prospects for thousands of additional workers who would benefit from expanding domestic production," he said.

While Japanese automakers have kept their home market imports at less than 5 percent, they control more than 20 percent of the U.S. market and their products represent more than 60 percent of the bilateral trade deficit.

In addition, Japan's safety regulations effectively coerce its citizens to buy domestic parts, since U.S.-source parts can cost buyers thousands of dollars in unnecessary inspections and repairs.

"The discrimination and inequity present in the existing trade relationship can no longer be papered over," AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland said in a letter to U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor urging action to correct the trade link.

"Union members in the rubber, glass, steel, aluminum, textile, machine tool, chemical, electrical, electronics and other industries would directly benefit from increased access to the Japanese auto market for competitive American products," Kirkland said.

"Unionized workers in other industries, including entertainment, telecommunications, construction, aerospace, paper and even more would gain additional jobs if the Japanese market were truly open and discrimination against U.S. producers was ended," he added. "Under a good agreement, we expect the U.S. automotive trade deficit with Japan to decline rapidly."

Merchandise Trade Deficit	
February	$13.3 billion
January	$15.9 billion

The federation maintained that negotiations must be fulfilled either through effective, verifiable agreements or reciprocal treatment of U.S. imports from Japan.

"The UAW and its members hope that a 'results-oriented' agreement, as proposed by the administration, can be reached promptly," said Bieber. "Should that prove impossible, the administration must act decisively to support the jobs and incomes of the skilled, highly productive American workers who build the high-quality vehicles and parts that are made by the U.S. industry."

"If an acceptable agreement cannot be reached in the next few months, the United States must impose sanctions on imports from Japan that are commensurate with the damage to American workers caused by Japan's barriers to U.S. products," Kirkland added. "It is time to demonstrate the administration's commitment to settling this long-running trade disaster."

Weak dollar narrows gap

Even as the dollar reached record lows against the yen, making American products ever cheaper in Japan, the U.S. merchandise trade gap with that country hovered at a stupendous $4.7 billion, a slight decrease from January's $4.9 billion.

The collapse of the Mexican peso accelerated the deficit, until recent months a surplus, that has come to characterize the bilateral relationship with the United States. In February, $1.3 billion more in goods went north of the border than went south, a huge jump from the $863 million recorded in January, and a far cry from the $322 million surplus of January 1994.

The trade deficit with Canada, the other partner in the North American Free Trade Agreement, also widened slightly in February to $1.5 billion.

Overall, the trade shortfall in goods was $13.3 billion, continuing a pattern of large deficits that led to record-breaking amounts of red ink last year.

American workers fall farther behind

That great mass of Americans that Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich calls "the anxious class" received more news to help it live up to its name.

Real weekly earnings for private non-farm production and non-supervisory workers continued their decline, dropping a seasonally adjusted 0.1 percent from February to March. The decline from a year earlier was 0.8 percent, and from 15 years ago, 8.2 percent.

The new data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that wages and salaries simply are not keeping pace with even the modest rate of inflation that has characterized the recent economy.

Reductions in real earnings were felt in transportation (1.5 percent); public utilities (1.5 percent); manufacturing (1.1 percent); construction (0.6 percent); and wholesale trade (0.6 percent). Mining had an increase of 1 percent, followed by finance, insurance and real estate (0.7 percent) and services (0.2 percent).

The inflation rate for March was a seasonally adjusted 0.3 percent, the same as in February. That brought the rate for the year to 3 percent, a figure matched by the median first-year wage increases negotiated through collective bargaining this year.

Most of the price increases are attributable to various transportation costs. Auto finance charges jumped, causing a 0.9 percent increase in "other private transportation services." New vehicles rose 0.4 percent and used cars 1.8 percent, the latter 15.8 percent ahead of a year ago.

Other increases were recorded in public transportation fares (2 percent) and medical care costs (0.3 percent). Food prices in March were steady and energy prices declined, although shelter costs moved up 0.4 percent and clothing prices edged up 0.1 percent.

Producer prices, which are a predictor of future economic activity, were unchanged in March after three consecutive monthly increases of 0.3 percent each, suggesting a general slowing down of the economy.

To maintain an urban family of four at the poverty line, AFL-CIO economist Anne Draper estimates, a worker would need an hourly wage of $7.44. The current federal minimum wage is $4.25 an hour. Although President Clinton has proposed raising the rate by 90 cents over two years, the Republican leadership in Congress has pledged to defeat the initiative.

— **David Kameras**

DATA

Real Earnings	
March	-0.1 percent
From March '94	-0.8 percent
From March '80	-8.2 percent
Consumer Prices (CPI-W)	
March	+0.3 percent
March '94 - March '95	+3.0 percent
Producer Prices	
March	Unchanged

Mexico gets Sony complaint from U.S. NAO

By David Kameras

For the first time ever, a U.S. agency has issued a complaint to the Mexican government about labor abuses in Mexico.

In a report released April 11, the U.S. National Administrative Office, an agency created as part of the North American Free Trade Agreement, pointed a finger at Mexican authorities for interfering with efforts by workers to organize a union at five Sony Corp. Magneticos de Mexico plants.

As a result, Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich called on the Mexican government to engage in consultations, which will focus on the latter's unwillingness to recognize independent unions. Cooperative programs on union elections and an independent study of the unjustified dismissal claims also are in the works.

In a letter to Santiago Onate, Mexican secretary of labor and social welfare, Reich said, "I believe it is important that we continue to discuss the labor rights and industrial relations which we have mutually agreed are of critical importance."

Ministerial consultations are the recourse prescribed by the feeble labor side agreement to NAFTA, and the NAO has been criticized over the last year for holding back from even this weak course of action.

However, "This decision has resurrected the NAO from irrelevance," said Jerome Levinson, legal counsel to the International Labor Rights Education and Research Fund. He called the report "a significant improvement over the decisions made in the first two NAO cases on violations by GE and Honeywell of their Mexican workers' rights."

In those complaints, brought by the unaffiliated United Electrical Workers and the Teamsters, respectively, the NAO last year found no evidence that the Mexican authorities had failed in its statutory obligation to protect workers despite widespread reports to the contrary.

Arturo Alcalde, representative of the National Association of Democratic Lawyers, said, "This decision calls attention to the basic problems faced by Mexican workers, namely that government authorities hold the labor law in contempt and the official unions do not respect the democratic rights of their rank-and-file members."

However, "We still have a long way to go," said Phoebe McKinney of the American Friends Service Committee Maquiladora Project, who noted that "effective accountability mechanisms" are still lacking with which to protect worker rights.

The NAO's assessment stems from a complaint filed last year by the three organizations, along with the Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras, changing that Mexican labor laws had been violated at the Nuevo Laredo locations.

The groups said Sony, in collaboration with the government-dominated official Mexican labor federation, repeatedly interfered with the independent unionists' challenges to the federation's leadership and with a delegate election held April 15, 1994. Actions included firings, demotions, on-the-job harassment, surveillance and police violence, as well as preventing workers from registering an independent union.

In its report, the NAO said, "It appears plausible that the workers' discharges occurred for the causes alleged, namely for participation in union organizing activities." The agency said there are "serious questions" about the ability of the employees to form an independent union.

Rubber Workers take campaign to world forum

Continued from Page 1

said. "Their CEO, Yoichiro Kaizaki, made a conscious decision early on to demand steep labor concessions in the United States."

Bridgestone operates 35 mostly unionized plants in 17 countries, Clem said. Through the ICEF, the URW is working with unions in other countries to identify possible Bridgestone production bound for the U.S. market, with an eye toward discouraging that flow of goods, he said.

The U.S. contingent was joined by unionists from 21 other countries, including Japan, in a visit to the Bridgestone plant in Izmit, a joint venture that enjoys cordial relations with the Turkish rubber workers union, Lastik-Is.

The delegation was greeted by Turkish Bridgestone workers with a banner protesting the company's anti-union campaign in the United States. Officials from Lastik-Is passed out URW protest armbands and talked with reporters from Turkish television.

"This was a very constructive meeting," said Yeselson. "From the Turkish workers to the Japanese, there was a sense that international solidarity is absolutely essential in dealing with multinationals like Bridgestone."



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Rep. David Bonior takes a critical look at the first 100 days of the Republican Congress at a forum sponsored by the Laborers at the National Press Club. Discussing the GOP agenda are Jessica Lee, USA Today; Robert Greenstein, Center on Policy and Budget Priorities; Bonior; and LIUNA President Arthur Coia. Other participants included Hal Bruno of ABC; Juan Williams, Washington Post; Douglas Bailey, Hotline; and David Boaz, Cato Institute. The "First 100 Daze" was marked by a hectic pace and a "losing agenda," Coia said. "It was an agenda developed from a big business, big money standpoint (that) undermined what the country was built on: education, training, a solid wage and job security," among other things. "The Republicans' programs are trying to take down what we believe is the American dream – building the country."

NEWSMAKERS

The Senate confirmed the reappointment of **John A. Gannon** as a member of the National Council On Disability. Gannon, currently the NCD vice chairperson, is president emeritus of the Fire Fighters and immediate past vice president of the AFL-CIO's Public Employees Department.

Gregory R. Watchman will join the Occupational Safety and Health Administration as a deputy assistant secretary in charge of legislative and interagency affairs. Watchman has served as chief labor counsel to the Senate Labor and Human Resources subcommittee on labor.

AWARDS

Jack Henning, executive secretary-treasurer of the California AFL-CIO, has been named to receive the labor award from the Southern California Americans for Democratic Action. Henning was cited for his role as a public servant and champion of labor. Other honorees include actress **Rosanne Barr** and **Rep. Ronald J. Dellums** (D-Calif.).

Louis F. Rodriguez received the Federal Employees Political Freedom Award from the Professional and Technical Engineers for leading IFPTE Local 174 at the Long Beach Naval Shipyard. Rodriguez and other federal employees have been able to become involved politically under 1994 Hatch Act reform.

DEATHS

Robert Marlow, secretary-treasurer of the Chemical Workers, died at his home after a long bout with cancer. He was 57.

Marlow was appointed ICWU legislative and political action director in 1978, became vice president and regional director in 1988 and was elected to the position of secretary-treasurer in 1992.

ICWU President Frank D. Martino hailed Marlow's lifelong service, noting he "was a valuable part of the ICWU since he first joined our union back in 1960, when he went to work for Lever Brothers in Baltimore."

Marlow is survived by his wife, three children and four grandchildren.

Russell M. Stephens, former president of the Professional and Technical Engineers, died after a brief illness. He was 83.

Stephens, who became active in the union in the late 1930s, held a variety of posts before he was elected president in 1952. Stephens almost doubled the union's membership during his 16-year tenure.

He was instrumental in forming the Scientific, Professional and Cultural Employees Council (SPACE) of the AFL-CIO and was appointed several times by then-President George Meany to represent U.S. workers in Europe on advisory committees of the International Labor Organization.

Stephens is survived by three sons, two stepsons, a stepdaughter, eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Iqbal Masih, a leader in the struggle against child labor at the tender age of 12, was gunned down on Easter Sunday as he and two friends rode bicycles through their Pakistani village.

Masih, who was sold into bondage at the age of four, was shackled to a carpet loom for almost six years before he gained his freedom. He received last year's Reebok Human Rights award for his work as president of the youth wing of the Bonded Labor Liberation Front, freeing other children similarly exploited.

The boy had been targeted for assassination by feudal landlords and industrialists, said Ehsan Illah Kahn, who heads the front's parent organizaiton.

Kirkland awarded Roosevelt 'Freedom'

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland, honored with one of "Four Freedoms" awards presented by the Roosevelt Institute, paid tribute to the important role that government plays in American life.

During the ceremony at the Little White House in Warm Springs, Ga., where President Clinton presented the awards, Kirkland cited the improvements that came out of the Roosevelt era — programs to help the elderly, the sick and the poor.

"Every person alive today, regardless of age or previous condition, is an heir of the works of that great period in our nation's life," he said. "I am proud to acknowledge that I am a child of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal."

In addition to Kirkland's "Freedom from Want" award, the organization handed out three other awards representing each of the four freedoms Roosevelt cited in a 1941 speech explaining why the nation must defeat fascism.

Washington Post columnist Mary McGrory received the "Freedom of Speech" award; Andrew Young, former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations and minister, received the "Freedom of Worship" award; and Elliot L. Richardson, who held numerous Cabinet positions in the Nixon administration, received the "Freedom from Fear" award.

The AFL-CIO, in a statement, urged U.S. businesses "to end their importation of child labor products, the true cost of which is measured in the blood of children like Iqbal."

Clinton vows to help women balance work, family

Continued from Page 1

jobs such as health care and office clerical work.

The Women's Bureau survey, Working Women Count, showed that women liked their jobs but wanted to reduce stress, balance work and family, improve pay and benefits, increase job training and end workplace discrimination. The recommendations focus on pay and benefits, work and family and valuing women's work.

The recommendations also include an enforcement component that relies on the Labor Department's Office of Federal Contract Compliance programs. To improve pay for women, OFCC would focus "significant enforcement effort on gender discrimination," according to the report.

OFCC is responsible for enforcing the executive order that requires employers doing business with the federal govenment to develop affirmative action plans.

A new simplified reporting form asks, for the first time, for information on pay, "so that we can understand whether there are wage discrepancies and get to the heart of the problem," Women's Bureau Director Karen Nussbaum told reporters during a press briefing following the White House ceremony.

That recommendation cannot be done adminisratively, so the administration will publish the proposal and get public comment, a process that should begin in the next couple of months, she said.

All of the recommendations have gone to Capitol Hill, including the administration's Middle Class Bill of Rights, which the president has made his centerpiece legislation. That proposal includes a tax deduction for education and job training and changes to individual retirement accounts that would help female workers finance their education.

"We're not sending new legislation to Capitol Hill, apart from the legislation that has been proposed on minimum wage, on skills, on training," Labor Department Secretary Robert B. Reich said during the briefing. "But believe it or not, there is a lot that can be done without legislation under present authority."

Some of the recommendations are administrative and voluntary. On the voluntary front, the administration is hoping private-sector employers will take advantage of a Fair Pay Information Clearinghouse the department plans to create to help employers voluntarily set up their own fair-pay system.

The contents of the clearinghouse would be cleared through the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and "be consistent" with OFCC pay discrimination enforcement policy.

Other recommendations include a partnership with the National League of Cities to expand access to child care and a pension education campaign.

Unionists rally across the country for job safety

Continued from Page 1

Health; strict cost-benefit analysis requirements for standards and a moratorium on new standards; and OSHA "reform" bills that would shift the focus of the agency from enforcement to consultation, reduce maximum penalties, prohibit the use of first-instance penalties, eliminate NIOSH and require workers to inform their employers before they file a complaint with OSHA.

The seventh annual Workers Memorial Day remembrance finds trade unionists preparing to fight each measure.

Events across the nation run the gamut from a 5K run/walk to a tree-planting to plaque dedications and candle-lighting ceremonies. Hearings and major rallies are slated for four cities — Boston, Greensboro, N.C., Los Angeles and New York City.

Other activities on tap for the day include an appearance by OSHA Administrator Joseph A. Dear at a remembrance in Indianapolis and a satellite media tour by AFL-CIO Safety and Health Director Peg Seminario.

The following is a partial list of events planned across the nation for the seventh observance of Workers Memorial Day, April 28:

ALABAMA

Birmingham (Alabama AFL-CIO) — Tree-planting ceremony and presentation of a plaque on April 28. Contact: Sidney Hannah, 205/942-5260.

Mobile (Southwest Alabama AFL-CIO, Mobile/Pensacola Building Trades and Greater Mobile Port Maritime Council) — Reception to honor fallen workers on April 28, 6-8 p.m., at the Asbestos Workers Union Hall. Contact: Pat Rabbeitt, 205/431-0101.

Tuscaloosa (West Alabama AFL-CIO) — Tree-planting ceremony and presentation of a plaque on April 30 at Vance City Hall. Contact: Sidney Hannah, 205/942-5260.

ALASKA

Anchorage (Anchorage AFL-CIO) — Memorial gathering with speakers at Park Strip on April 28 at 6 p.m. Contact: Harriet Lawlor, 907/277-5200.

ARIZONA

Phoenix (Arizona state and regional AFL-CIOs) — Memorial gathering on April 28, 4-6 p.m., at Wesley-Bolin Park. Contact: Carolyn Smith, 602/258-3407.

ARKANSAS

El Dorado (Arkansas AFL-CIO) — Proclamation issued from the city and reading of names of deceased workers, 12 noon on April 28 on City Hall steps. Contact: J. Bill Becker, 501/375-9101.

Pine Bluff (Arkansas AFL-CIO) — Reading of names of deceased workers and speech by family member of deceased worker, 5300 Hoover St., April 28 at 4:30 p.m. Contact: J. Bill Becker, 501/375-9101.

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles (Los Angeles County AFL-CIO, various unions) — News conference and memorial events at Los Angeles Federal Building, April 27 from 11:30 a.m. until 1 p.m., with members of Congress, victims of workplace incidents and survivors. Event will include red roses as a symbol of fallen workers and photo display of deceased and injured workers. Contact: Jan Borunda, Los Angeles County AFL-CIO, 213/381-5611 x12; Steve Weingarten, 213/738-9000; Diane Factor, UCLA/LOSH, 310/450-0282.

CONNECTICUT

Waterbury (Connecticut AFL-CIO, Fire Fighters, Police, building trades unions) — Ceremony highlighting police officer and two firefighters killed in the line of duty, April 28, at 4 p.m. in front of Policemen and Firemen's Memorial, Waterbury City Hall. Contact: John Olson, 203/953-8717; Wayne Gyenizs, 203/288-9261.

FLORIDA

Panama City (Northwest Florida AFL-CIO, Panama City and Tallahassee locals) — March from Tommy Oliver Stadium to Panama City Hall and subsequent rally, April 22, 9-11:30 a.m. Contact: Paul Vasquez, 404/766-5050 or 904/747-9374.

ILLINOIS

Bloomington (Bloomington and Normal Trades and Labor Assembly) —Ceremony April 28 at 3:45 p.m. at UAW Local 2488 Union Hall on Route 9 West, including dedication of hall to Joe Frank, a Diamond-Star Motors employee killed on the job last July. Contact: Mike Matejka, 309/827-3934.

Danville (Vermilion County AFL-CIO) — Memorial service April 28 at 4 p.m. at Workers Memorial (Pape Memorial Gardens, Hazel Street), including balloon launching with cards attached representing each name on the memorial. Contact: Chuck Brooks, 217/442-3512.

Peoria (West Central Illinois AFL-CIO) — Candlelight memorial service at Workers Memorial Monument on April 28 at 7:30 p.m. at 417 Fulton St. Contact: Nancy Gardner, 309/674-5449.

INDIANA

Indianapolis (Indiana AFL-CIO) — Dedication at 10 a.m. on April 28 at the State Capitol of life-sized monument of three figures to the memory of Indiana workers killed or injured on the job. The statue depicts labor's various trades and crafts and was made possible by building trades union volunteers. Contact: Charles Deppert, 317/632-9147.

IOWA

Clinton (Clinton Labor Congress) — Observing moment of silence at noon on April 28. Also placing radio and newspaper ads. Contact: Bob Soesbe, 319/242-2735.

KENTUCKY

Frankfort (Kentucky AFL-CIO) — Ceremony to honor Kentucky workers killed on the job; includes tree planting and dedication at 1 p.m. on April 28 at state AFL-CIO headquarters (340 Democrat Drive). Contact: Dewey Parker, 502/695-6172.

MAINE

Augusta (Maine AFL-CIO) — Program including tables with information materials, proclamation, speakers, moment of silence, church bells and fire engine sirens, at the State House Hall of Flags on April 28, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Contact: Vinny O'Malley, 207/622-7823, or Ken Morgan, 207/947-0006.

MARYLAND

Baltimore (AFSCME Council 67 and the Metropolitan Baltimore AFL-CIO) — Ceremony on April 28, 12 noon to 1 p.m., at War Memorial Plaza (Lexington and Gay Streets). Contact: Ernest R. Grecco, 410/242-1300.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston (Massachusetts and regional AFL-CIOs, Massachusetts COSH) —Hearing and rally for workplace safety, including Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) and Rep. Joe Moakley (D-Mass.), at 10 a.m. on April 28, Boston City Hall. Contact: Rich Rogers, 617/227-8260.

North Dartmouth (UMass Dartmouth Labor Education Center) — Third Annual Workers Memorial Day 5K Road Race and Fun Walk, April 23 at 10 a.m., including post-race events, awards ceremony, raffle, food and information tables. Contact: Robert Vitello, 508/999-8007.

MICHIGAN

Detroit (Southeast Michigan COSH) — Lunch at Clothing and Textile Workers' Hall (1550 Howard), 12 noon on April 28. Tickets are $5. Contact: Sue Charette, 313/961-3345.

Lansing (Michigan AFL-CIO and Michigan State Building and Construction Trades Council) — Workers' Rights Rally on May 3 at 1 p.m. in front of State Capitol. Contact: Mark Alexander, 517/487-5966.

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis (Minneapolis and St. Paul Building Trades councils) —Joint memorial ceremony on April 28 at 12 noon in Operating Engineers Union Hall, Local 49 at 2829 Anthony Lane. Contact John Williams, 612/379-4234.

Statewide (Central Minnesota Trades and Labor Assembly) — Moment of silence observance at various work areas/plants and at various times throughout the state on April 28. Contact: 612/252-4654.

MONTANA

Billings (Greater Yellowstone AFL-CIO) — "Black Arm Band Day" on April 28 for all 28 affiliated local unions. Contact: Laura Dygert, 406/373-6462.

NEBRASKA

Omaha (Omaha AFL-CIO and Nebraska Labor History Society) —Presentation on April 28 at 12 noon at west end of Central Park Mall. Includes proclamation, moment of silence, labor songs, flier distribution and closing remarks. Contact: Terry Moore, 402/346-4800.

NEVADA

Carson City (Nevada AFL-CIO) — Rally April 28 at Ormsby House Hotel (600 S. Carson St.) at 10 a.m. Contact: Blackie Evans or Danny Thompson, 702/882-7490.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Concord (New Hampshire AFL-CIO) — Demonstration on April 28 at 10 a.m. in front of Sen. Judd Gregg's office, located at 125 N. Main St., followed by luncheon and memorial service at 11:15 a.m. at New Hampshire AFL-CIO. Contact: Barbara Ashlock or Sandy Chabot, 603/224-4789.

NEW JERSEY

Haledon (American Labor Museum/Botto House National Landmark; Bergen County and Passaic County AFL-CIOs) — Program on April 28 at 7:30 p.m. includes video presentation on workplace safety, follow-up discussion, candlelight vigil and reading of names of workers injured on the job. Contact: Angelica M. Santomauro, 201/595-7953.

Trenton (New Jersey Industrial Union Council, New Jersey Right-to-Know Coalition, various unions) — Memorial service for workplace victims on April 28, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m., at Statehouse, Room 103. Presentation of postcards to Governor Whitman at the memorial service. Contact: Rick Engler, 609/866-9405.

NEW YORK

New York (New York City AFL-CIO) — Rally at Union Square Park (Broadway and 14th St.) on April 28. Contact: Ted H. Jacobsen, 212/685-9552.

New York (New York COSH, various unions) — A public fact-finding hearing on job safety hosted by Rep. Major R. Owens (D-N.Y.) on April 28 at 9 a.m., Bellevue Hospital Center Auditorium (First Ave. and 27th St.). Contact: NYCOSH, 212/627-3900.

NORTH CAROLINA

Greensboro (North Carolina AFL-CIO and Triad AFL-CIO) — Activists' meeting at Greensboro Labor Temple (325 J.J. Drive) on April 29, 10-11:30 a.m.; rally at noon at Guilford County Courthouse, Government Plaza, with Rep. Mel Watt (D-N.C.) and workers from Hamlet fire. Contact: Chris Scott, 919/833-6678.

NORTH DAKOTA

Bismarck (Missouri Slope AFL-CIO) — Rally on May 6 at 11 a.m. on Capitol steps. Contact: Gerard Friesz, 701/223-1964.

OHIO

Cincinnati (Cincinnati AFL-CIO) — Demonstration at Fountain Square (5th and Vine Sts.) on April 28 at 12 noon. Also planning to wear black ribbons/armbands and encouraging moment of silence at job sites for fallen workers. Contact: Dan Radford, 513/421-1846.

Lorain (Lorain County AFL-CIO) — Memorial services April 28 at 8:30 a.m. in Elyria and at 12 noon in Lorain, at worker memorial monuments dedicated in 1992. Contact: John Gallo, 216/365-7000.

Toledo (United Labor Committee of Northwestern Ohio) — Memorial service with Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-Ohio) and testimony from workers, as well as prayer service and auction to raise funds for permanent memorial. Contact: Carol Sizemore, 419/248-3331, x213.

OREGON

Salem (Oregon AFL-CIO) — Rally from noon to 1 p.m. on steps of State Capitol. Activities include speakers, songs, personal testimony, proclamation signing by Governor Kitzhaber. Lobbying activities 9 a.m.-12 noon and 1-3 p.m. Contact: Brad Witt, 503/585-6320.

PENNSYLVANIA

Allentown/Bethlehem (Lehigh and Northampton AFL-CIOs) — Service April 29 at 11 a.m. at monument erected in honor of fallen workers in Bethlehem Rose Garden (8th Ave. and Union Blvd.). Ceremony includes reading of names of deceased workers and scholarship presentation. Contact: Frances E. Polgar, 610/758-8015.

Erie (Central Labor Union and Industrial Union Council of Erie County) — Ceremony honoring fallen workers at Labor Monument in Perry Square (5th and 6th Sts.) on April 28 at 7 p.m. Contact: Jim Bielak, 814/459-4823.

Harrisburg (Harrisburg Region AFL-CIO) — Rally/gathering at Rotunda of State Capitol Building 10 a.m.-12 noon on April 28. Material and single black rose will be delivered to each state legislator. Contact: Jim Mulholland, 717/939-9366.

Philadelphia (Philadelphia COSH, Philadelphia AFL-CIO) — Labor breakfast on April 28, registration beginning at 9:30 a.m. and breakfast at 10 a.m. at Sheet Metal Workers Local 19 Hall (1301 S. Delaware Ave.). Seventh Annual Workers Memorial Day program will include guest speakers, invocation, mock funeral service, procession to Great Plaza (Penn's Landing), reading of names of those who lost their lives and casting of flowers into Delaware River accompanied by playing of bagpipes. Contact: Jim Moran, 215/386-7000.

RHODE ISLAND

Providence (Rhode Island COSH) — Rally at State Republican headquarters on April 28 at 12:30 p.m. Contact: Jim Celenza, 401/751-2015.

SOUTH DAKOTA

South Dakota (South Dakota AFL-CIO and Sioux Falls Trades and Labor Assembly) — Ceremony including reading of names of deceased workers and speeches on April 28 at 10 a.m. at Sioux Falls Labor Temple (101 South Fairfax). Contact: Curt Soehl, 605/332-3004.

TENNESSEE

Knoxville (Knoxville-Oak Ridge Area AFL-CIO) — Program including reading of proclamations from mayor and county executive, speakers, reading of names of fallen workers, candle-lighting ceremony, prayer service and playing of taps, at 12 noon on April 28 at Market Square Mall in downtown Knoxville. Also encouraging labor/management to wear red sticker dots to symbolize silent remembrance of workers who died in the past year. Contact: Sylvia Woods, 615/523-9752.

VIRGINIA

Richmond (Richmond Regional AFL-CIO) — Press conference April 29 to announce erection of workers memorial monument for Virginia's working men and women who lost their lives on the job or who have been injured. The monument will be built through donations from working men and women. Contact: Jack Dotson, 804/346-4777.

WASHINGTON

Seattle (King AFL-CIO and Washington COSH) — Rally from 12 noon to 1 p.m. on April 28. Contact: Mark Catlin, 206/767-7426.

WEST VIRGINIA

Benwood/New Martinsville (Marshall, Wetzel, Tyler AFL-CIO) —Ceremony at 6 p.m. on April 28 in Benwood Park, includes invocation, reading of names and bell ringing. Contact: Denny Longwell, 614/483-1376, or Joe Powell, 304/344-3557.

Ravenswood (USWA Local 5668) — Ceremony dedicating monument to all workers killed on the job at Ravenswood, on union hall grounds, April 29 at 1 p.m. Contact: Dewey Taylor, 304/273-9319.

WISCONSIN

Milwaukee (Wisconsin and Milwaukee AFL-CIOs, Wisconsin Labor History Society, Wisconsin COSH) — Program at IBT Local 200 at 6299 West Bluemound Road, at 6 p.m. on April 28. Contact: Bruce Colburn, 414/771-7070.

Wausau (Marathon AFL-CIO) — March and rally on April 28 at 6 p.m. The rally will form at Labor Temple Parking Lot, then march to River Walk Park, where flag pole will be dedicated and names added to Labor Temple Plaque. Contact: Robert Andringa, 715/845-5881.

AFL-CIO NEWS

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Chilean workers wary of multinational corporations, NAFTA. **See FOCUS, Pages 6-7.**

AFL-CIO NEWS

VOLUME 40, NUMBER 10 **MAY 8, 1995**

Terror in Oklahoma City

Workers cope with loss, help pick up the pieces



By Sharolyn A. Rosier

Jane Graham was scheduled for computer training April 19, so she went straight up to the ninth floor, past her seventh floor office at the Department of Housing and Urban Development regional office in Oklahoma City.

"As I sat down at my computer, I was thrown several feet, landed on my back, lost consciousness and when I came to all I could see was the sky above," said Graham of the blast that rocked the nation.

Graham is president of Government Employees Local 3138, which represents 124 HUD employees at the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building.

Today she is the only member of the local's executive board left alive. "Everything in my normal work area on the seventh floor was gone," she said.

Many of the estimated 170 people dead or missing are AFGE members. In the HUD office, which takes up three floors, 60 people were working that day. Other AFGE units include Local 3642 at the General Services Administration, Local 3506 at the Social Security Administration Office of Hearings and Appeals (OHA) and

Continued on Page 5



Photo by Oklahoma AFL-CIO; inset photo by Robert Davis/SYGMA

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue addresses a Workers Memorial Day rally outside the statehouse in Oklahoma City, where Government Workers suddenly were thrust in the line of fire by a terrorist bombing. Fire Fighter Christopher Fields, a member of IAFF Local 1524, struggled in vain to save a wounded baby, a picture that became the symbol of the tragedy. **More of Workers Memorial Day, Page 12.**

Workers push Congress on 100-day fiasco

Stand UP campaign takes many forms in districts

By Mike Hall

Union members used traditional and innovative grass-roots activities during the April congressional recess to stand up against the assault on workers by the 104th Congress.

More than 50 Legislative Action Committee meetings were held with House members, involving more than 1,000 activists from 54 affiliated unions. Workers Memorial Day offered a stage for events in more than 30 states, and an AFL-CIO television and radio ad campaign elicited several thousand telephone calls to special hot lines.

In addition to the key districts where the ads ran, direct mail to more than 20,000 union members was used in two districts. And still other activities included dozens of town meetings, job site leafleting and letter signings, and even a 10-day vigil in front of the office of a House member who refused to meet with union workers.

In all, it was the highest level of union grass-roots work in recent times — a response demanded by the great threat to worker rights made clear in the first 100 days of this Congress.

The activities, said AFL-CIO Legislative Director Peggy Taylor, define "our ability to succeed in the effort to protect the rights and standard of living of working men and women. The meetings with members of Congress are, indeed, a critical part of that effort."

Along with the April recess meetings, an additional 26 meetings were scheduled with lawmakers for later dates, and union activists also were preparing for the upcoming Memorial Day break.

Meetings with members who have shown a willingness to listen help shore up support for vital issues and remind those House members of the support they get from working people, said Tom Owens, grass-roots lobbying coordinator.

Talking with those with poor labor voting records can potentially open the door for communication and even cooperation on some issues, or identify those who are and want to remain downright hostile. And that identification, in turn, can be the starting point for the 1996 congressional election campaigns.

If denied a meeting, LAC members sought to attend town meetings. But the absence of public meetings

Continued on Page 3

Decatur union busters get tax breaks, undermine economy

By James B. Parks

Taxpayers are unknowingly subsidizing the anti-worker activities of three multinational employers who deliberately provoked strikes and locked out or replaced workers.

The companies — A.E. Staley Manufacturing, Caterpillar Inc. and Bridgestone/Firestone — all have plants in a 9.3-square-mile "enterprise zone" in Decatur, Ill., where they receive property tax abatements and credits against their state income tax on the value of new construction or machinery renovation.

Some 4,000 workers, 7 percent of Decatur's work force, are on strike or locked out by the companies. Ironically, the zones were created to preserve and create jobs in depressed areas.

"Our analysis shows Staley got tax breaks worth over $500,000 in 1993 alone," said Art Dhermy, a locked-out member of Paperworkers Local 7837. "But employment at the plant has declined by 690 jobs, or 48 percent, since it began getting the enterprise zone abatements. The community is stuck with higher tax bills for schools, fire departments and police while Staley destroys jobs and gets a free ride."

Property taxes on five pieces of Staley property were reduced by 30 percent in 1986, Dhermy said, from $12 million to $8.4 million. Another $183,000 was knocked off in 1991, he said.

Last October, in the middle of its lockout of 760 UPIU members, Staley received a new sales tax exemption on the purchase of machinery. The company was supposed to show that the investment would save jobs. But in reality, Staley is using the exemption for new equipment that will help automate the facility and eliminate jobs, the union said.

Meanwhile, a new study portrays the conflicts in

Continued on Page 9

Unionists battle legislative assault state by state

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

The onslaught of anti-worker legislation continues at the state level, where union activists are working to turn back right-to-work legislation, privatization and efforts to gut workers' compensation, as well as the attack on prevailing wage laws.

A major shift in the party composition of state legislatures after the November election has left workers vulnerable. In Indiana, for example, the Republican-controlled House and Senate overrode Gov. Evan Bayh's veto of right-to-work legislation for school employees. A simple majority was all that was needed to restore the bill.

"It's a sign of the times that anti-worker groups have seized control in the state," said Indiana AFL-CIO President Charles Deppert. "It's the teachers today and next time it will be another, and eventually it will be all workers and their unions."

Building trades unionists were disappointed when Bayh signed a bill that revises the state's prevailing wage law, although their efforts helped to temper original plans by Republicans to gut the law. Deppert said the new law would make the wage-setting process more difficult, and that it would be challenged in court because it is too vague.

In California, right-to-work legislation covering all employees was withdrawn due to a lack of support. Another right-to-work bill for school employees is pending committee action.

So-called "right to work" prohibits labor and management from negotiating a union security agreement. Union security requires employees who gain the benefits of collective bargaining to share in the costs of union representation, contract administration and service from the union.

Without union security, "freeloaders" can refuse to pay their fair share, thereby threatening to financially cripple the union.

Legislation passed 16-13 in the Oregon Senate would eliminate fair share or any form of union security. But a vote was pending in committee to place the issue on the ballot. Another bill in the state House calls for a constitutional amendment stating that an employee may not be required to make payments to an organization that is involved in political activities contrary to the beliefs of the employee.

"We will definitely have a vote on right to work by the November 1996 elections," said Oregon AFL-CIO President Irvin H. Fletcher.

Meanwhile, Oklahoma Gov. Frank Keating is considering calling a special session of the state legislature to address right to work, tort reform and the budget. Right-to-work measures failed in House and Senate committees, but the House passed an amendment to other legislation that allows for a ballot vote on the issue.

"There is no groundswell from the people for 'right to work for less,' " said Oklahoma AFL-CIO President Ross Williams. "We are prepared to wage a vigorous campaign against the issue if it ever goes to a vote."

A recent survey of state federations conducted by the AFL-CIO Office of State Government Liaison found the assault on workers to be widespread. Privatization efforts aimed at state and/or local employees are ongoing in 43 states.



AFSCME photo

Cynthia Carter is all smiles as the school custodian meets the press on her first day as a Baltimore city employee and AFSCME member, having doubled her wages and benefits.

City, workers celebrate public service

Baltimore sees benefits as custodians double wages

By Muriel H. Cooper

Life just got better for Cynthia Carter and 62 other custodians at Baltimore city schools.

Once low-wage, private-sector workers cleaning the city's schools, Carter and her co-workers now are union members working for the city with good wages, benefits and self-respect.

The move to bring privatized work back to the public sector was spearheaded by a coalition that includes AFSCME, the Solidarity Sponsoring Committee (SSC), an organization of low-wage Baltimore service workers, and Baltimorans United in Leadership Development (BUILD).

"You've moved from the role of the victim to that of victor," said AFSCME President Gerald W. McEntee as the custodians began their first evening shift as members of AFSCME Local 44.

> *"This is a great day for my family and me . . . I thank you for investing in Baltimore's working families."*
>
> **—Custodian Cynthia Carter**

Carter had been among the estimated 22 percent of city residents who live in poverty. Making the minimum wage of $4.25 an hour, about $8,500 a year, her purchasing power had dropped 27 percent since 1979.

"This is a great day for my family and me, and other custodians who have been cleaning Baltimore schools for poverty wages," said Carter. "I thank you for investing in Baltimore's working families."

Carter will see her hourly wage rate double from $4.25 to $8.64 and, for the first time, will have such benefits as health care, sick leave and vacation.

It makes better economic sense for the city to take back the work, said Glenard S. Middleton, executive director of AFSCME Council 67. With contractors paying the bare minimum and not offering health benefits, more workers were relying on the city's social services.

The low wages also caused a high turnover rate, with a new crew coming in every few months, Middleton said. "Everybody was complaining about the service. We showed the city that we could train the workers, do the work better and give workers self-respect, which in turn empowers them to want to do better."

Initially, custodians at six Baltimore schools will return to the city's payroll. The remaining 21 schools that contract out are expected to phase in city employment as various contracts expire. About 315 custodians will become AFSCME Local 44 members when they return as public-sector workers.

"I have lost count of the number of times I have been told by a minimum wage worker that he or she cannot sustain a family," said Mayor Kurt L. Schmoke. "They say, 'Mr. Mayor, I'm doing my best. I'm working hard, but I cannot take care of my family on $4.25 an hour.' "

Schmoke last year signed a "living wage" law that requires, as of July, all new or renegotiated service contracts with the city to provide for at least $6.10 an hour, the "living wage." The city council had passed the ordinance after an intensive campaign by AFSCME, SSC and BUILD.

"The living wage ordinance is fair, and it makes long-term economic sense for Baltimore," said Schmoke. "In the long run, we are better off having a community of workers that can take care of their families, do not have to rely heavily on social services and feel the personal dignity that comes with earning a decent wage."

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Director of Information: Rex Hardesty

Editor: Michael Byrne

Assistant Editors: Candice Johnson, David Kameras, James B. Parks

Staff Writers: Muriel H. Cooper, Mike Hall Colleen M. O'Neill, Sharolyn A. Rosier

Graphics/Layout: Stan Hitt, Hindi M. Fracasse

AFL-CIO Headquarters: 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006
Telephone: (202) 637-5010
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Legal scholars assail company union bill

By James B. Parks

A member of the Dunlop Commission is among many leading labor law scholars who are warning that the so-called TEAM Act would undermine real unions and spawn illegal company unions.

The bill "goes much too far" in allowing non-union employers to start anti-union programs under the guise of employee participation, said Paula B. Voos of the University of Wisconsin and a member of the Dunlop Commission. It fails to "guard sufficiently against the return of company unionism," she said.

"Indeed, if the Kassebaum-Gunderson bill is passed without modification, I predict it will create serious problems for employee involvement initiatives in this country, and possibly even reduce the extent of genuine employee participation and voice," she said.

The misnamed Teamwork for Employees and Management (TEAM) Act, S.295 and H.R. 743, introduced by Sen. Nancy L. Kassebaum (R-Kan.) and Rep. Steve Gunderson (R-Wis.), would lift the 60-year-old ban on certain types of company-sponsored employee committees by amending Section 8(a)(2) of the National Labor Relations Act. The House Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee will hold a hearing May 11 and Senate hearings are expected later.

The proposed legislation would allow employers in organized workplaces to use employee participation programs to "undermine existing unions by bypassing them," Voos said. If employers start doing that, she said, the progress made in employee involvement "is likely to end."

"Non-union employers would be able to set up committees to discuss wages and benefits, or they could set up elaborate 'employee representation' plans," Voos said. "Employers could create such committees or plans, determine their methods of operation, choose the employee 'representatives' and represent these powerless bodies to the work force as an effective method of dealing with their workplace problems.

"Historically, employers did this primarily to keep unions out, not to provide employees with real power or influence," she pointed out.

Voos' attack on the bill is significant since she voted with the majority of the commission in recommending a "clarification" of Section 8(a)(2) to ensure that legitimate employee participation programs are legal. But the commission said the change must include safeguards against company unions and be coupled with reforms to make organizing easier.

Congress should not amend Section 8(a)(2), Voos said, in a way that makes labor relations even more adversarial, disrupts existing labor-management relationships and encourages union avoidance schemes that could displace real employee involvement.

Supporters of the TEAM Act exaggerated the need for reform, and the bill "positively encourages employers to set up sham employee committees of the same kind that proliferated prior to passage of the NLRA," according to Charles J. Morris, professor emeritus at Southern Methodist University and a leading authority on federal labor law.

Contrary to claims of employer groups, Morris said, "not a single decision of the NLRB has cast a shadow" on "any legitimate worker participation programs, for those programs continue to thrive."

The evidence overwhelmingly shows that employee involvement programs are spreading throughout industry under existing law and that no legislation is necessary, said University of South Carolina Professor Hoyt N. Wheeler, a former management lawyer and one of the authors of an open letter to Congress by academics opposing the bill.

"We are persuaded that passage of the TEAM Act would quickly lead to the return of employer-dominated employee organizations and employee representation plans that existed in the 1920s and 1930s," which the NLRA was designed to eliminate, he said.

The letter's other authors are Profs. Harry C. Katz of Cornell University and Clyde W. Summers of the University of Pennsylvania Law School.



Robert Davis/Chicago Sun-Times

Among the union rallies throughout the country during the recent congressional recess was this demonstration by Service Employees outside the office of Rep. Michael Patrick Flanagan (R-Ill.).

Unionists Stand UP with recess fight

Continued from Page 1

didn't stop union members in Ohio, who held a 10-day vigil in front of the district office of Republican Rep. John Kasich, one of the main architects of Republican budget and tax plans. The 20 people carrying signs and passing out literature drew local news media coverage.

In Los Angeles, some 250 union members gathered at the office of Republican Rep. Carlos J. Moorhead to talk about the GOP's "Contract with America." About 90 SEIU members, part of Chicagoans Against the Contract with America, brought those same concerns to the office of GOP Rep. Michael P. Flanagan.

The Steelworkers, Electrical Workers and other building trades unions in Ohio coordinated cellular phone calls from workers on job sites to the offices of GOP Reps. Martin Hoke and Steven LaTourette.

In North Carolina, 14 union members from nine unions met with freshman Republican Rep. Fred Heineman, who earlier had told CWA members, "unions don't serve any function." While workers appealed for decent wages, job safety and other worker needs, Heineman's standard response was, "I don't want to debate who owns the store."

Rep. Jay Dickey (R-Ark.) expressed his anger over being targeted by the AFL-CIO's ads, even though he has done just what the ads said: voted against OSHA and for tax cuts for the rich. Arkansas union members passed out leaflets about the $3,500 fine OSHA levied against Dickey's own business.

The AFL-CIO's two direct-mail campaigns spotlighted the abysmal record of Republicans Harris Fawell of Illinois and Cass Ballenger of North Carolina. Some 24,000 of those letters went to union members in the two districts, one letter awarding an "F" to the House member "because that's the lowest grade we have."

Other LAC meetings with GOP members proved more fruitful. One congressman revealed the effectiveness of the TV ads in his district, telling union members his eight-year-old daughter asked him why he was trying to cut school lunches.

Others found common ground. In Ohio, Republican Rep. Bob Ney told 26 members from 10 unions that he did not support repeal of the Davis-Bacon or Service Contract acts, believed in a minimum wage increase — although smaller than President Clinton's plan to raise it 90 cents over two years — and is with the AFL-CIO in its opposition to the TEAM Act to allow employer-dominated employee organizations.

In Washington state, union members held LAC meetings with a number of representatives and still are scheduling other sessions. Union members joined town meetings in Kentucky, Connecticut, California, Oregon, Wisconsin, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Ohio and other states.

Budget slashers slow down, fear wrath of voters

By Mike Hall

Senate Republicans, fearful of public reaction to proposed cuts in Medicare and Medicaid, postponed their 1996 budget resolution.

That proposal was to be the GOP's first step toward achieving a balanced federal budget by 2002, a goal that requires more than $1 trillion in spending cuts.

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland called for a strong defense of Medicare by all trade unionists, particularly the 200 who are among the delegates to the May 2-5 White House Conference on Aging.

"Medicare reform can only be undertaken in an atmosphere of comprehensive health care reform," Kirkland said. He noted that President Clinton "has steadfastly pursued that goal, only to be obstructed by the same forces who now cite a Medicare 'crisis' as reason to cut Medicare while they enact tax cuts for the wealthy."

Senate Republicans are fighting among themselves over whether to include a tax cut similar to the $189 billion package passed by the House in April, which mainly benefits the wealthy and business. If the tax cut is included in the Senate package, more than $1.3 trillion in cuts would be needed to reach the GOP's budget goals. The Senate Budget Committee is expected to begin work on the proposal this week.

The budget resolution, the first step of a three-part process, is the blueprint for spending plans for the fiscal year and beyond. An appropriations process that includes 13 separate funding bills is next, followed by the budget reconciliation, which combines all spending cuts that have not yet been enacted into one omnibus bill.

Preliminary indications are that the resolution plan that will be proposed by Senate Budget Committee Chairman Pete Domenici (R-N.M.) will slash Medicare spending by $250 billion and cut Medicaid by an additional $160 million.

Other benefit programs are expected to be slashed by as much as $230 billion. These include federal pensions, the earned income tax credit, Supplemental Social Security Income for the disabled and aged, unemployment insurance, veteran's aid and student loans. Nutrition and food stamp programs will be hurt by expected cuts in agriculture programs.

Senate GOP leaders expect to have their budget resolution on the floor sometime before Memorial Day. A Democratic alternative is not expected.

On the House side, a budget resolution must outline more than $1 trillion in spending cuts, in addition to the cost of the GOP tax giveaway to the rich.

COURTS

Sprint workers get UI benefits

Former Sprint employees, fired just before a union vote, won their first legal victory when an administrative law judge ordered the state of California to pay them overdue unemployment benefits.

Sprint last July abruptly closed the offices of the highly profitable La Conexion Familiar, a subsidiary that services the Spanish-speaking community. About 70 percent of the 235 workers at the San Francisco operation had petitioned for a union representation election. Sprint subsequently moved its Spanish-language operations to Texas.

The Communications Workers filed an unfair labor practice complaint that is still pending with the National Labor Relations Board.

The state Employment Development Department denied the workers unemployment benefits because the company paid each fired employee a lump sum for its failure to give 60 days notice of the closing under the federal Workers Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act. Judge Carmen Flores ruled that payments to avoid federal civil damages should not be considered wages which disqualify workers from getting jobless benefits.

WARN arguments presented

Workers whose plants close without the required 60-day notice should have two to four years to sue for damages, the AFL-CIO argued before the U.S. Supreme Court.

The cases arose from mass layoffs at Crown Cork & Seal, where the Steelworkers represented some 85 workers, and at non-union North Star Steel. Employees at both plants allege they were laid off without receiving the 60 days notice required under the federal Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification, or WARN, Act. The employers claimed that since the act did not contain a time limit for filing suits, the six-month limit in the National Labor Relations Act applied.

AFL-CIO General Counsel Laurence Gold, speaking for the Steelworkers, the federation and the non-union workers, told the justices that most of the workers covered by the WARN Act do not have a collective bargaining contract. The WARN Act, unlike the NLRA, is not designed to foster collective bargaining, and the six-month time limit should not apply to suits under both laws, he said.

Benefits cutoff reconsidered

The Supreme Court agreed to hear a case that will clarify when defunct companies can cancel health and other benefits for their former employees.

The case, Varity vs. Howe, began in 1986 when Varity Corp., based in Buffalo, N.Y., transferred part of the farm equipment manufacturing operation of its subsidiary, Massey-Ferguson Inc., into a new company, Massey Combines Corp., located in Des Moines.

Some Massey employees agreed to transfer to the new company, which also took over providing health and dental insurance, life insurance and other benefits to some Massey-Ferguson retirees. Massey Combines was placed in receivership in 1988, and benefits for the employees and retirees were canceled.

A group of former employees and retirees sued in federal court and won $46 million in damages, but a federal judge reduced the amount to $8.3 million. The judge called the restructuring "a sucker punch on loyal employees who had given a lifetime of service."

The 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the ruling, but revised the damage award to $800,000 and ordered that the workers be returned to the Massey-Ferguson retiree health and benefits plan.

Teamsters get back pay

Some 58 employees of Central Cartage Co. will receive $5.1 million in back pay under a settlement of unfair labor practice charges by the Teamsters.

The National Labor Relations Board ruled in 1990 that Central Cartage illegally laid off and failed to recall some members of IBT Local 964 at its Cleveland terminal. The company reneged on a 1993 settlement and tried to reopen the case.

After the federal courts refused to change the ruling, the company agreed to a new settlement. "This settlement at long last vindicates the rights of Central's employees . . . to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing," NLRB General Counsel Fred Feinstein said.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

A symbolic torch arrives after being passed up Capitol Hill from old to young as Teresa Ghilarducci, AFL-CIO employee benefits assistant director, kicks off labor participation in the White House Conference on Aging, which would focus on the inter-generational connection of Social Security. Some 200 labor delegates delivered the message that Americans overwhelmingly support Social Security and Medicare, know the programs are closely linked and do not want Congress to tamper with them.

Unions: USDA subsidizing injustice

Rally hits corporate welfare for walnut, grape growers

By James B. Parks

The corporate welfare program that pours millions of tax dollars into the coffers of anti-worker agricultural giants such as Diamond Walnuts and California Table Grape Association must end, the Teamsters and Farm Workers said.

That message was delivered by hundreds of IBT and UFW members and their supporters in a rally April 21 outside a House Agriculture Committee field hearing in Stockton, Calif., on the 1995 farm bill.

The workers called for an end to the Agriculture Department's Market Promotion Program, which has paid $1.4 billion in tax dollars since 1986 to promote sales of products overseas for such companies as Diamond Walnut, McDonald's, Pillsbury and Sunkist.

"Taxpayers are not only subsidizing millionaires, we're subsidizing injustice. It's time to wipe out welfare for agribusiness and get millionaires off the dole," said IBT President Ron Carey.

> *"It's time to wipe out welfare for agribusiness and get millionaires off the dole."*
>
> **— IBT President Ron Carey**

"Members of Congress who voted for the Contract on America that hurt working people are now out here talking to millionaire growers and agribusiness about how to give them more of the taxpayers' money," said Farm Workers Vice President Delores Huerta.

"While food stamps, school lunch programs, Medicare and Social Security are on the chopping block, the Republican-controlled Congress is trying to protect the giant corporate welfare programs for U.S. agribusiness," Carey added.

The workers were joined by members of the Stockton school board, who called for the federal government to stop buying Diamond walnuts and products by the grape association for the school lunch program.

The ban was sought under the executive order signed March 8 by President Clinton barring federal contracts with companies that use "permanent" scabs.

"Since Diamond Walnut threw us out and replaced us, it's been hard to make ends meet," said Cynthia Zavala, a striking member of IBT Local 601. "Now the federal government is using our tax dollars to prop up Diamond Walnut by buying walnuts and feeding them to my grandchildren. We're hurt twice by this. We lost our jobs and we're still paying taxes to support Diamond Walnut and its corporate greed."

Some 500 IBT members walked out in 1991 after the company demanded huge concessions. The mostly Hispanic, female workers were permanently replaced shortly thereafter. The National Labor Relations Board threw out two elections to decertify the union and ordered that a third be held.

The Department of Labor's Office of the American Workplace (OAW) is investigating federal contracts held by several companies, including Diamond Walnut, that used permanent replacements for strikers. The other companies include Bridgestone/Firestone, Mosler Inc. and Cook Family Foods. These companies could be the first ones to be reviewed once the rules for implementing the order go into effect.

The 30-day comment period for the proposed rules ended April 28. The Labor Department will review the comments and issue a final rule as soon as possible, said Charles L. Smith, special assistant to the deputy labor secretary.

Under the proposed rule, the department would conduct an investigation or hold a hearing when it receives a complaint from any employee or his representative charging that workers engaged in a lawful strike with a federal contractor were permanently replaced.

The head of the contracting agency could veto the department's decision to terminate the contract, according to the proposed rule.

Meanwhile, NLRB Chairman William B. Gould defended his public statements backing a ban on permanent replacements. In response to a letter from three Republican House members, Gould said he has every right to express his views on labor law reform and that his public statements "in no way compromise my role as an adjudicator in cases involving those issues."

The three congressmen — Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee Chairman William Goodling (Pa.), Harris Falwell (Ill.) and Peter Hoekstra (Mich.) — wrote Gould April 7 expressing "serious concern" that his views opposing permanent replacements "undermined public trust in your ability to carry out your obligation" to be impartial. They suggested he recuse himself from NLRB cases involving permanent replacements.

"With all due respect, I must reject your characterization of my position," Gould wrote back. "I know the law . . . and I have never permitted my personal views on issues, including striker replacement, to override my best insight into what the current law dictates in a given case," he said.

Unions mourn dead, aid Oklahoma victims

Continued from Page 1

Local 2505 at the SSA District Office.

Many of the victims were in the first floor SSA office, where among the dead was Rubber Workers Local 998 Benefits Representative Tom Hawthorne, who died trying to check on benefits for union members on strike against Bridgestone/Firestone.

"Our members in that building were serving the public when this attack occurred," said AFGE President John N. Sturdivant. "Members of the public were already lined up for assistance when the bomb went off. Because of the work we do, we are intricately linked with the public we serve."

Members of the Fire Fighters got an unusual alarm — their own downtown station rocked and dust was flying everywhere as they scrambled out to help. Critical communications problems for all the rescuers were tackled by Communications Workers locals. The president of CWA Local 6016, Barry Gardner, lived so close to the scene that his home was shattered.

All the rescuers depended on the quick work of building trades union members in shoring up the structure so the work could continue, said Oklahoma AFL-CIO President Ross Williams. Iron Workers, Elevator Constructors, Sheet Metal Workers, Operating Engineers and Plumbers and Pipefitters were all on the scene.

Local 1141 Electrical Workers provided power so the work could go around the clock, and Carpenters representatives had 25 Local 329 members helping build the walkways, hand rails and trash chutes necessary to the rescue work.

IAFF Local 1524 President Charlie Stone said, "It was like there was just one big, frightened family on the street at that moment."

Within 24 hours after the bombing, more than 1,000 fire fighters from across the nation joined IAFF Local 1524 in its rescue efforts, part of 10 teams of the "urban search and rescue response system" set up by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Some even came from as far away as Germany and Australia after observing the carnage and massive injuries on television.

The challenge became "to remove the bodies in a manner so no one else is injured," said Stone. All Fire Fighters were briefed on what to expect — and what not to do — before they headed into the building.

IAFF President Alfred K. Whitehead quickly joined the effort to ensure that fire fighters were receiving adequate counseling and assistance for their grim task. "I thank God that so far the Fire Fighters and other rescuers here have escaped death and serious injury except for the one brave nurse who gave her life while trying to save others," he said.

Despite the creaks and groans coming from tons of concrete and debris hanging over their heads, Whitehead said, the IAFF members "crawl through tiny openings and wade through putrid water up to their waists without hesitation."

According to FEMA, the rescue efforts have been successful because of the back-up crews of truck drivers, operating engineers, iron workers, carpenters, electricians, emergency medical technicians and a number of local service employees who helped clean up the debris in the streets.



George Burke/IAFF

Fire Fighters President Alfred K. Whitehead, with Oklahoma Assistant Fire Chief Jon Hansen, a member of IAFF Local 1524, and James Lee Witt, director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, addresses rescue teams in front of the bombing site.

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue held out the hope to the Workers Memorial Day gathering in Oklahoma City that the grief over the dead and the coming together in a heroic rescue effort could be used to "fashion a new determination to reject hate, to root it out of our society."

Donahue spoke April 27 at the previously scheduled event on the steps of the Oklahoma capitol, where he was joined by Whitehead, Sturdivant, Gerald W. McEntee of AFSCME and Robert A. Georgine of the Building and Construction Trades.

Decrying the attack and continued bomb threats on government buildings, Sturdivant told the gathering, "We are not bureaucrats, we are patriots." McEntee, whose AFSCME members with the city emergency unit were first on the scene, said the tragedy should remind the nation "that government is us. Government has 250 million faces."

In support of the workers and their families, AFSCME, IAFF and the AFL-CIO Public Employee Department ran a full-page New York Times advertisement April 27 stating, "The people who work in government service are the faces of America. Serving all of us. In times of crisis. And every day. We honor them. Today, we grieve for those who died."

Georgine spoke wearing a memorial button remembering Valerie Koelsch, the daughter of longtime Sheet Metal Workers local president Harry Koelsch and the sister of Operating Engineers business agent Greg Koelsch. Many building trades workers hadn't been home since the rescue work began immediately after the explosion, Georgine said, reminding the crowd that one worker dies "every hour of every day — lives lost only because of their jobs."

Donahue called Workers Memorial Day "our way of reminding America that our workplaces can be dangerous places, and a reminder of the need for effective enforcement of occupational safety and health regulations."

"But today, there is something very ominous and frightening: a free-wheeling hatred, an eagerness for violence, a reverence for weaponry, a contempt for democratic government." He said the bombing "left a gaping moral wound that we must heal."

"Let us here resolve that each of us will undertake to still the voices of hate, that we may never again have to memorialize so many whose lives held so much promise for good."

Trade unionists also are providing financial and moral support to the victims' families and those injured in the blast. The response from so many unions — including the IBEW, Plumbers and the Teamsters — has been universal, said Stan Gordon, AFL-CIO Community Services liaison, who is directing union relief efforts.

"We understand money will not solve all of the problems. We have also provided three community service liaisons and others are on standby to assist union members," said AFL-CIO Department of Community Services Director Green Lewis.

Williams, the state federation president, presented Sturdivant and AFGE national vice president Robert Ball with a $20,000 check from the Postal Workers sent to the state AFL-CIO office by APWU President Moe Biller.

Donations should be mailed to the following relief funds:

- AFGE Oklahoma City Relief Fund c/o United Bank, Attention: Customer Service, 4600 Southeast 29th St., Del City, Okla. 73115.
- Fire Fighters Disaster Recovery Fund, P.O. Box 24044, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73124-9984.
- Tom Hawthorne Benefit Fund, Guaranty Bank and Trust Co., P.O. Box 25676, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73125-0676.

In death, youth spurs child labor fight

Consumers hear of struggle, endorse RUGMARK campaign

By Muriel H. Cooper

The assassination of a courageous 12-year-old in Pakistan has galvanized the campaign to gain consumer support to end child labor worldwide.

As worker rights and consumer advocates leafleted outside stores that sell carpets made by children, gathering signatures on petitions supporting the RUGMARK campaign, the memory of Iqbal Masih was invoked again and again. RUGMARK labels are affixed to hand-knotted carpets and guarantee that the rugs are made free of child labor.

Masih, who was gunned down on Easter Sunday as he and two friends rode bicycles through their Pakistani village, was sold into bondage at the age of four and shackled to a carpet loom for almost six years before he gained his freedom.

As president of the youth wing of the Bonded Labor Liberation Front of Pakistan, Masih worked to free other children who are similarly exploited in industries ranging from the making of sports equipment to medical instruments. For this work, he received the 1994 Reebok Youth in Action award, gaining notoriety that his supporters say led to his assassination.

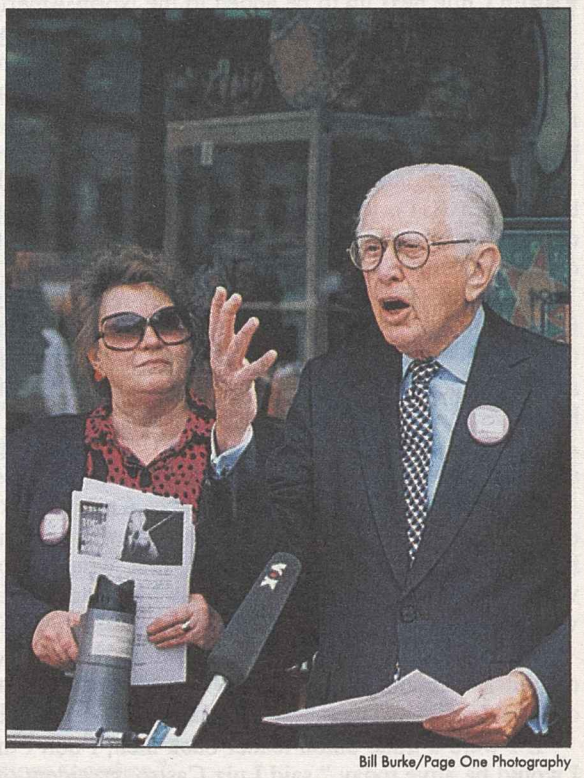
The AFL-CIO pledged to continue its campaign to end the lucrative international trade in the products of child slavery, "in memory of Iqbal Masih and all the other children sacrificed on the altar of corporate greed." With the RUGMARK drive, backed by the federation and coordinated by the Child Labor Coalition, consumers are being educated about the shame of child labor.

The leafleting April 25 outside the Pier 1 Imports and Ethan Allen stores in Washington was "a good healthy start," said Child Labor Coalition co-chair Pharis Harvey. "Iqbal's death reinforces the message that child slavery must be ended today, before other childhoods and lives are lost."

Harvey was joined outside the stores by co-chair Linda Golodner of the National Consumer League and former Sen. Howard Metzenbaum (D-Ohio), who is chairman of the Consumer Federation of America.

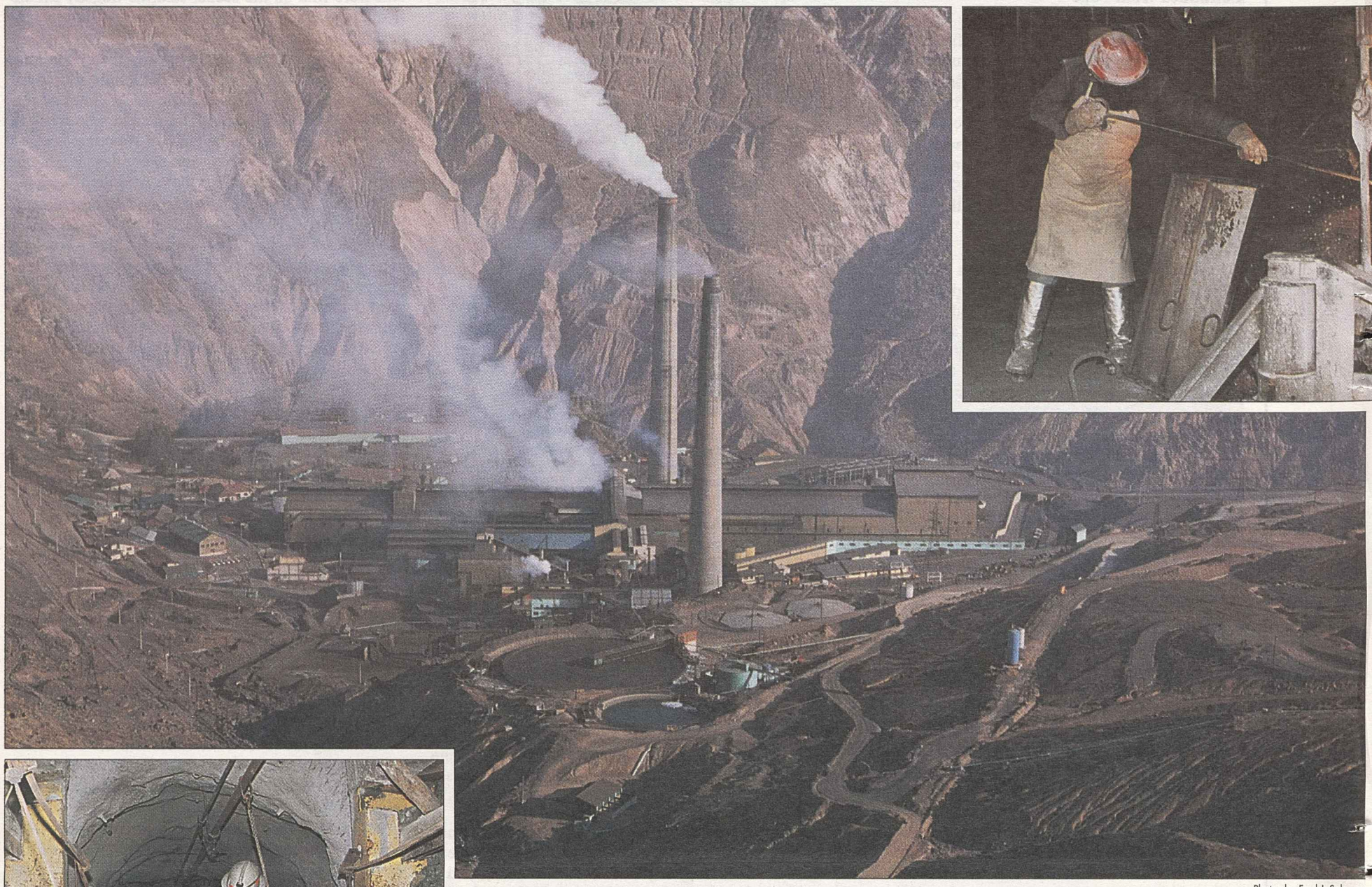
The Child Labor Coalition has been successful in encouraging 55 Indian carpet manufacturers to become RUGMARK certified, with promises that they will not employ children or contract out to companies that use child labor.

RUGMARK will have petitions available at the Union Industries show in Detroit May 19-22. For more information about the petitions or the RUGMARK campaign, call Darlene Adkins at 202/639-8140.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Former Sen. Howard Metzenbaum urges shoppers to sign petitions asking retailers to stock and sell RUGMARKed carpets. At left is Linda Golodner, co-chair of the Child Labor Coalition.





Photos by Fred J. Solowey

El Teniente copper mine, the largest underground copper mine in the world, is among the government-owned mines in Chile that account for 18 percent of the world's copper production. The smelting facility (inset, above) is attached to the mine, which is largely mechanized, although some manual mining is still done (inset, left). The copper industry unions are among the strongest and most militant in the country, but they so far have been unable to organize the U.S.-owned private copper industry, which employs a number of anti-union tactics to keep workers unorganized. Under the 1989 agreement restoring democracy, 10 percent of government copper mine profits go to the military.

Chilean workers distrust NAFTA

Unions on both sides seek worker rights protections

By Fred J. Solowey
Special to the AFL-CIO News

With Chile next up to be added to the North American Free Trade Agreement, Chile's labor movement — battered by the repression of the past and operating under a labor code designed to keep it weak — is mounting a fight against the multinational corporations that seek expanded control of their nation's resources.

The Chilean labor federation, Central Unitaria de Trabajadores (CUT), joined with the AFL-CIO last year in calling for bilateral trade negotiations between the two countries, rather than extension of NAFTA to Chile.

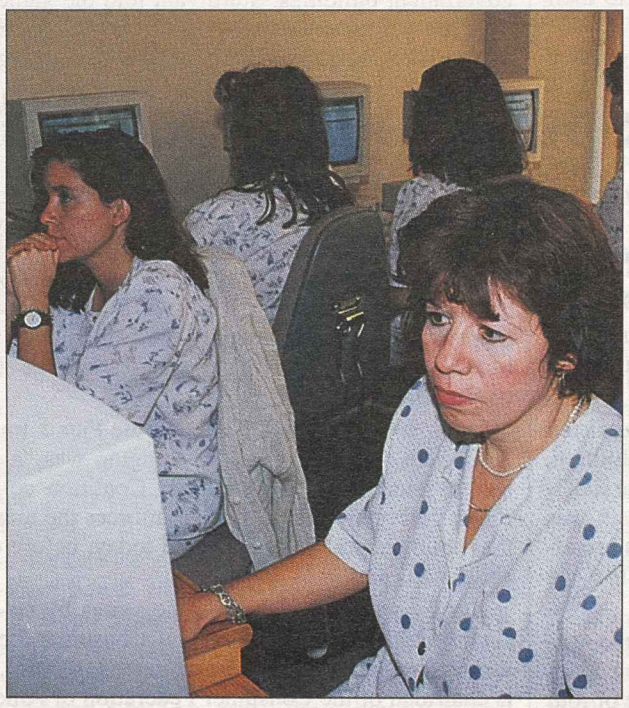
"While recognizing that the NAFTA represented a small first step in addressing workers' interests, workers in both the United States and Chile did not want the flawed labor side agreement to NAFTA to be the standard for further hemispheric integration," Mark Anderson, director of the AFL-CIO task force on trade, told the U.S. Trade Representative April 28.

The economic and political scene in Chile points up clearly why Chilean workers fear being swept up in an investment agreement like NAFTA that would exploit workers in both countries — even as Mexican and U.S. workers have been exploited.

Chile's union movement is still recovering from 17 years of military dictatorship, ending in 1990, which saw thousands of union leaders and members fired, jailed, tortured or killed.

"If I were a trade union leader back then, I don't think I would be alive today," said Luiz Castro, president of an oil refinery union. "The strong laws that really favored workers and protected our rights were thrown out."

Guided by right-wing economists trained at the University of Chicago, the military government implemented an extreme version of Reaganomics that resulted in one of the least regulated economies in the world.



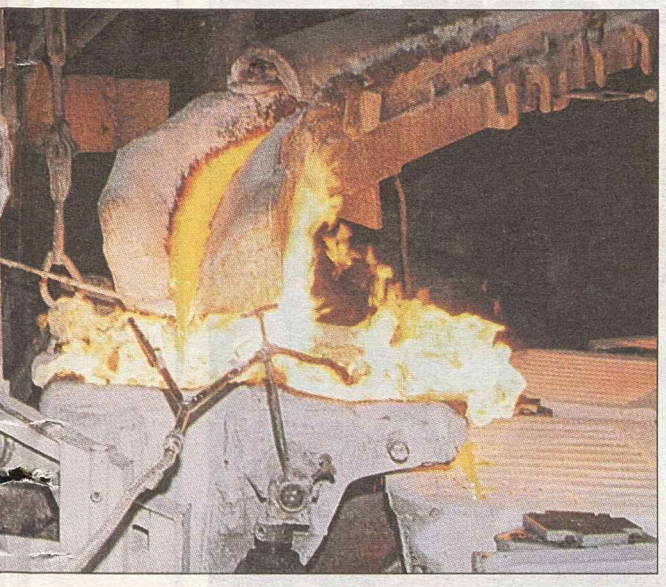
The nation's social security and national health care systems — won through decades of struggle — were privatized. As a result, workers still must pay the total cost of their retirement and health care — with many having access to neither. More than 1.8 million workers (almost 40 percent of those employed) have no retirement plan. Workers have to pay part of the cost of education, too, in a system intentionally weakened by the use of school vouchers and cuts in government funding.

When international solidarity from the United States and elsewhere pressured the dictatorship to respect labor rights, it responded with the 1979 labor code that "was totally designed to fit the needs of the employer class," explained Antonio Congegeros, president of a union at a steel fabricating company.

Under the code, trade union organization beyond the



While unions are helping workers gain respect, they are fighting an uphill battle to gain living wages, say Victor Vargas and Arnoldo Montoyo, above, officials of the union that represents workers at the General Electric plant in Santiago. Unions also must battle corporate strategies such as the one employed by the Chilean telephone company, which has subdivided into eight separate units, resulting in four different unions representing workers in the telephone business office at left.



"I don't understand NAFTA very well. But it can't be very good for us. Look what it's done to Mexican workers."

— Chilean worker at El Teniente copper mine smelter

local level was banned, as was bargaining over anything but wages. Exclusive bargaining agreements were outlawed — and multiple, competing unions in the same work place (bargaining separate agreements) encouraged, with employers also allowed to form non-union "bargaining groups."



Safety and health problems are especially bad in the construction industry. Two workers died at this subway construction site two days after workers staged a protest over safety conditions.

Seasonal workers like those who harvest Chile's vast fruit crop were denied the right to unionize. The right to strike was rendered almost impossible to use, and employers retained the right to fire any worker without even giving a reason.

Thus it is not surprising that workers have been left behind in the "Chilean economic miracle" that is regularly celebrated in U.S. business magazines.

Despite 10 straight years of sustained economic growth, a booming stock market and low unemployment, an incredible 45 percent of employed Chileans live below the official poverty level. More than 21 percent of workers (more than one million) work in the "informal" labor market.

"You practically have to live in the factory working overtime in order to survive," explained Victor Vargas, president of a union at the General Electric plant in Santiago.

Subcontracting, privatization, hiring of temporary workers, speed-up, downsizing and using low wages to fund technological change have all become standard tools in the employer tool chest.

Those laws that do exist to defend workers are poorly enforced, pointed out Luiz Munos, president of the union at a cardboard box factory owned by a U.S. company. "The workers at our plant were forced to work Sundays for three years without overtime pay," he said. The union, which was formed because of such conditions, is still fighting to get back pay.

Chile's unions have grown and won some reforms since the return to civilian government in 1990, including the right to have trade union structures beyond the local level. But none of the changes have redressed the imbalance of power.

Part of the reason for this is that former dictator Augusto Pinochet, under the current constitution, appoints nine senators, insuring that the right-wing parties in Congress can block any reforms that employers dislike.

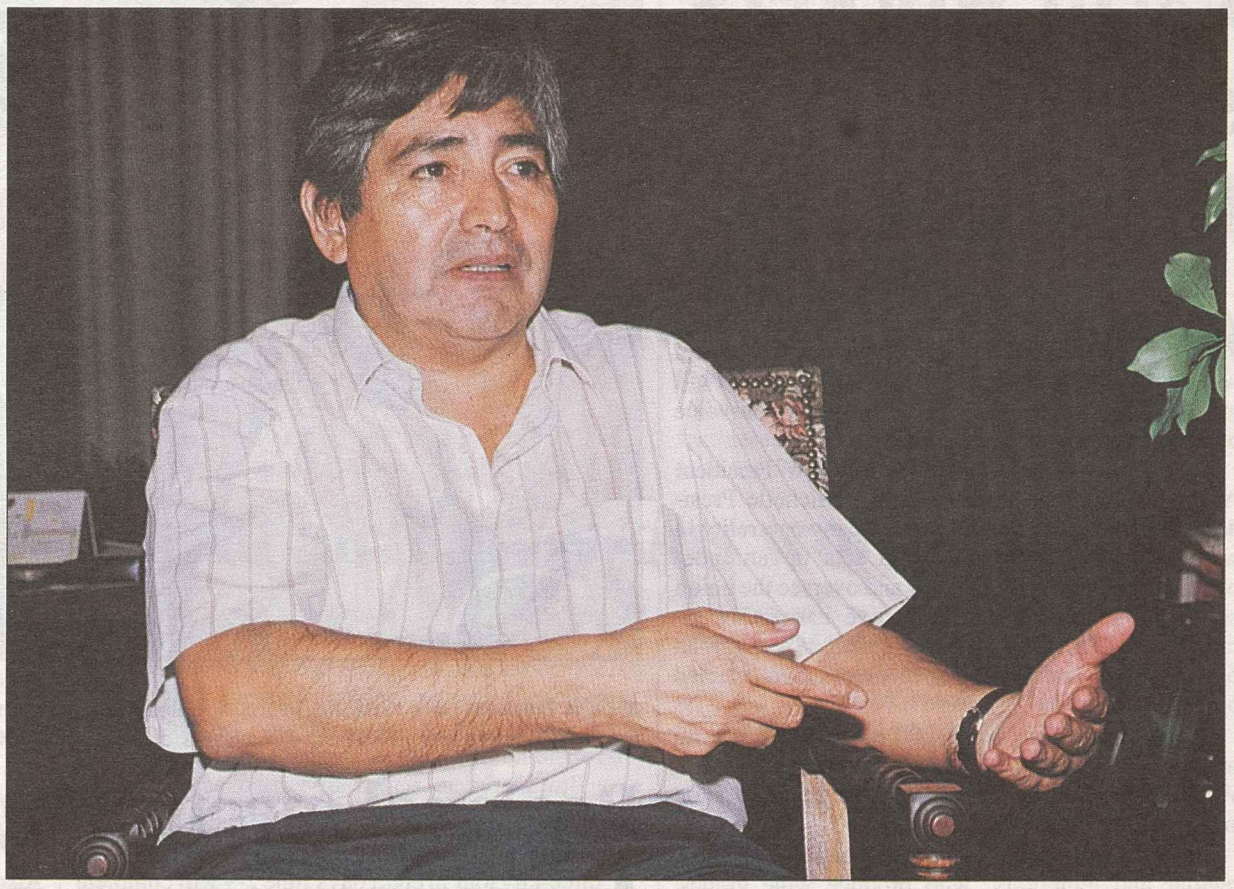
In addition, the parties in the ruling government coalition — once sharply critical of Pinochet's economic policies — have largely now embraced them, albeit in a kinder and gentler form.

"Some of the reformed socialists in the government would be comfortable with Newt Gingrich," explained Norman Schipull of the American Institute for Free Labor Development.

Chilean unions know that to protect — and expand — worker rights in the wake of NAFTA will be a difficult fight, one they can't make alone.

"If our labor movement is to regain its strength — and I believe it will — international solidarity has to be a very important part of our vision," explained Raymundo Espinoza, president of the copper workers confederation. "Especially with the coming of NAFTA, workers in the U.S. and Chile face the same problems and we must find solutions together."

— Fred J. Solowey, a former editor with AFSCME and the Teamsters, recently returned from a trip to Chile. He is a member of UAW Local 1981, the National Writers Union.



Manuel Bustos, president of Chile's labor federation: "U.S. workers' rights are our rights too."

A struggle for the Americas

Chile's top labor leader sees worker solidarity as key

The top leader of the Chilean labor movement says he is determined to add strong social protections to any trade agreement between the United States and Chile, or to lead labor's efforts against it.

"U.S. workers put up a good fight against NAFTA. Now we have to fight together with them for our common rights in any expansion of the agreement," said Manuel Bustos, president of the Central Unitaria de Trabajadores (CUT), the Chilean equivalent of the AFL-CIO, during a recent interview in his Santiago office.

The 30-year activist for the rights of Chilean workers suffered greatly under the military government that ruled Chile for 17 years.

He was imprisoned in Chile's national stadium (where many met their deaths) for 12 days immediately after the Sept. 11, 1973, military coup. Arrested again in 1976, he served three years in prison for his union activities, and was jailed again in 1980. Later came a year of forced exile, another six months in prison in 1985, followed by 14 months of internal exile in 1987-88.

Never cowed, he then helped lead labor's successful fight to win a return to elected civilian government in 1990.

Yet, because of his strong opposition to NAFTA, he has been smeared by Chilean business leaders as being more concerned about the interests of U.S. workers than those of Chilean toilers.

But he fires right back at his critics.

"I say it is good that we support U.S. workers. Their rights are my rights too," said Bustos, now 49 and the father of four, who began working in a textile factory at age 19.

"We don't want a race to the bottom with workers in the United States and Chile competing against each other," he said. "We don't want U.S. companies coming here to Chile to pay miserable wages while they are damaging employment in the United States. We only want foreign investment that will help bring all people up. That's real development."

Bustos argues that the multinational corporations want Chile as the next NAFTA country in part because of the great damage done to worker rights under the dictatorship. And he knows that the fight being waged now will be important to all workers in the Americas.

"We don't want a race to the bottom with workers in the United States and Chile competing against each other. We don't want U.S. companies coming here to Chile to pay miserable wages."

—Manuel Bustos, president, Central Unitaria de Trabajadores

"Chile is a landing site for corporations and capital, and what the transnationals want is to dominate the entire region in a free trade zone," he explained. "As it stands now, this expanded NAFTA will be for the rest of Latin America what it has been in Mexico — misery for workers. It won't solve the problems of underdevelopment and poverty and it will continue to hurt workers in the United States and Canada."

Bustos is determined to continue the fight to win stronger labor laws to protect Chilean workers and at the same time work with allies in the north for strong social clauses in the trade pact.

"I'm grateful for the solidarity U.S. and Canadian workers showed us while we were fighting against the dictatorship. The fact that the unions in the three countries are working together and coordinating their efforts now makes governments and business uncomfortable. Maybe it will make them listen," he said, exhibiting the optimism that has kept him fighting for decades.

"Without our unions, our unity and our solidarity with each other, we are easy prey."

— Fred J. Solowey

Farm Workers score major breakthrough

By Candice Johnson

A landmark election agreement between the Farm Workers and Stimson Lane Ltd., owner of several wine-producing facilities in Washington state, will give workers a fair chance in their fight for a voice on the job.

The agreement, signed May 3 by UFW President Arturo Rodriguez and Chateau Ste. Michelle President Allen Shoup, provides for company neutrality in workers' organizing efforts and sets up an independent commission to monitor and oversee the union certification election and collective bargaining arrangements. The commission will include a chairman picked jointly and four other members, two selected by both sides.

The accord affects some 200 mostly Latino farm workers at Chateau Ste. Michelle/Columbia Crest Winery, who have been seeking union representation and a contract since 1987.

The bargaining unit includes agricultural workers, regular and temporary, who produce wine grapes. Workers on an adjacent vegetable ranch also will vote, and will be added to the unit if they vote for union representation.

Although Washington has the third-highest number of farm workers in the nation, there is no agricultural labor relations law in the state, nor are farm workers covered by federal labor law.

Rodriguez said the historic accord "sets a precedent for similar agreements with other employers in Washington state to enable elections and bargaining to go forward, and also sets a good example for states which have no legislation on farm workers' rights."

It will allow farm workers in Washington, for the first time, to go through the election process free from coercion and intimidation, and offers a real opportunity to gain a collective bargaining agreement, he said. The settlement provides that if a contract is not reached within 75 days after bargaining begins, an arbitrator will be selected to resolve remaining issues. Shoup said the winery was pleased that the accord "gives our employees the right to vote by secret ballot on whether they want UFW representation."

The agreement comes on the heels of the UFW's 10th straight election win — a 115-8 vote by workers at Sunrise Mushroom in Watsonville, Calif. Rodriguez pointed out that the series of victories, including an agreement with the nation's largest rose producer, Bear Creek Production Co., "is fulfilling the dream of Cesar Chavez to build a strong national union for farm workers."

Rodriguez expressed gratitude to those who supported the farm workers throughout their eight-year struggle to gain the Stimson accord, including the Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers; Service Employees; Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union; Teamsters; and the Washington AFL-CIO.

The agreement was finalized April 28 in the office of AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland. Kirkland noted that, in reaching the election agreement, both parties "have shown a real commitment to make progress, and the imagination, flexibility and patience to find good solutions."

Under the terms of the agreement, each party shall refrain from expressing statements that are defamatory or disparaging to the other, and the company "shall refrain from encouraging or discouraging its employees to vote for or against the union."

Union representatives will have access to the worksite on seven separate days during non-working hours prior to the election in order to meet with workers. The UFW can meet with eligible voters during one hour on company time, and also will be able to post information on a company bulletin board during the campaign. Upon the signature of the agreement, the UFW received a list of all workers eligible to vote.

A UFW boycott of Stimson Lane wines was joined by many labor, religious and environmental groups. As a result of the agreement, the UFW has suspended all boycott activities.



Bill Pritchett/SEIU photo

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland, in Los Angeles for a regional conference, joins board members of SEIU Local 399 to celebrate the new contract forged in the union's Justice for Janitors campaign.

Regional meetings go on to 3 cities

A three-city tour in eight days June 2-9 will complete the AFL-CIO's 1995 regional conferences following an initial conference April 21-22 in Los Angeles.

The remaining three conferences will be held June 2-3 in Boston, June 5-6 in Orlando and June 8-9 in Chicago.

The first conference began with a Friday night question-and-answer session with AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland, with the second day featuring three 90-minute sessions on communications, full participation and legislative and political action.

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue closed the session at lunch on Saturday.

Before the conference, Kirkland met with board members of Service Employees Local 399 in celebration of the breakthrough contract reached April 1 that brings all Los Angeles metropolitan area janitors under one contract and provides a hiring hall for future protection of their standards. Also attending was SEIU President John J. Sweeney.

Kirkland, who marched with Local 399 members at the beginning of their Justice for Janitors efforts in 1990, praised the "brilliant" strategy that allowed the union to break through the news media screen and draw attention to the janitors.

The Los Angeles meeting marked 15 years since the start of regional conferences for Kirkland and Donahue. A major component in the 1995 regionals is the display of a variety of AFL-CIO computer capabilities that greatly enhance the flow of information for organizing and other union activities.

One is the Unicore database, which tracks the union status of companies in the United States, and FAIR (Federation Arbitrators Information Report) on arbitrators and cases. The AFL-CIO's NLRB tracking system, meanwhile, provides extensive information on union organizing campaigns across the country. Also demonstrated is the AFL-CIO's LaborNET and a preview of LaborWeb, the AFL-CIO's "home page" on the Internet, which will be inaugurated at about the time of the last three regionals.

All AFL-CIO units — state federations as well as city and county central bodies — are encouraged to attend the sessions, with all union officers invited to attend. The hotel locations are the Sheraton Boston Hotel and Towers, the Hotel Royal Plaza in the Walt Disney World Village in Orlando and the Palmer House and Towers in Chicago.

Registration and reservation for all three remaining conferences can be arranged through state AFL-CIOs or directly with Nancy Tutt at the AFL-CIO, 815 16th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

The full-participation workshop is an extension of the committee created by the AFL-CIO Executive Council to explore ways to extend representation in union offices at all levels. President John Sturdivant of the Government Employees chairs that committee and is scheduled to attend the Boston conference, as are AFL-CIO Civil Rights Committee Chair Lenore Miller, president of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, and Electronic Workers Vice President Gloria Johnson, president of the Coalition of Labor Union Women.

In Los Angeles, the legislative and political action workshop by AFL-CIO Legislative Director Peggy Taylor and COPE director Richard Walsh was conducted at the launch of intensive AFL-CIO grass-roots lobbying of the 104th Congress during its Easter recess.

The communications workshop features the AFL-CIO's Stand UP campaign — its purpose, materials and methods. The session emphasizes local events and local news media relations, including how to — and how not to — deliver the Stand UP message.

Railroads try to sidetrack negotiations

Rail workers are getting the unmistakable message that national railroads are playing hardball in this year's contract negotiations.

That was clear in comments by Robert Krebs, chief executive officer of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway, who last month predicted that current industrywide negotiations will result in a work stoppage later this year. "We are headed toward some kind of confrontation," he said.

L.W. Swert, chief negotiator of the United Transportation Union, retorted that it is "totally irresponsible for either side to predict a work stoppage at this stage."

"If a work stoppage comes on a national basis, it will be a lockout, not a strike," added a spokesperson for the Locomotive Engineers.

After years of contractions and massive job cuts, railroads last year had operating income in excess of $6.5 billion. Transportation Communications Union President Robert Scardelletti observed, "The carriers, with record profits, want rollbacks . . . and we want improvements."

"Their strategy is shameful," he told union members. "You have helped make their huge profits possible, but now they don't want to share with you."

Santa Fe and seven other major carriers are trying to bargain on a multiemployer basis through their National Carriers Conference Committee, a process opposed by the Maintenance of Way Employees.

A federal court has blocked the union from calling a strike against Consolidated Rail Corporation, saying the Railway Labor Act's "long and drawn-out procedures have only just begun."

"We are concerned that the carriers have been able to buy additional delay," said BMWE attorney Bill Bon. "The problem we have in the interim is they will be able to avoid local bargaining." The union is considering appealing the decision.

ACTWU pact boosts 35,000 workers, their industry

By James B. Parks

The Clothing and Textile Workers overwhelmingly ratified a new three-year contract that raises wages and benefits by 7.1 percent in the tailored men's clothing industry.

The agreement with the Clothing Manufacturers Association is effective May 1 and covers some 35,000 workers throughout the country. The increase in benefits includes a 20-cent wage increase each year. The average hourly wage for workers under the previous contract was about $8.80.

"Everyone is aware of the difficulties facing our workers and the industry," ACTWU President Jack Sheinkman said. "We worked hard to achieve for our workers the best contract under tough industrial conditions. We believe this contract will help keep jobs here in America and assist in stabilizing unionized plants. As always, ACTWU is committed to strengthening domestic production and providing job security for our members."

The contract continues a unique globalization agreement that allows the CMA companies to outsource a percentage of their production, if they also commit to investing in improved upgrading of their domestic facilities. The agreement requires advance notice of outsourcing and guarantees at least 1,470 hours of work a year for each of the current employees for the life of the deal.

According to the outsourcing agreement, the amount of CMA production that can be outsourced increases from no more than 15 percent between Oct. 1 and Sept. 30 in the first year to 20 percent in the same months in the second year and 22 percent in the third year.

The employers also agreed to only use partners or contractors that observe international labor standards. These standards include providing a living wage and reasonable work hours.

The contractors also must allow freedom of association as defined by the International Labor Organization, which includes the right to organize, bargain collectively and to strike.

The employers also cannot work with contractors that use child labor or forced labor or who discriminate or who do not provide a safe and healthy work environment.

The CMA companies will continue to have the option of paying into a jointly controlled 401(k) plan for the workers or to pay a bonus.

The previous agreement expired April 30. Tentative agreement on a new contract was reached April 27.

The CMA represents several dozen clothing manufacturers across the country. The largest concentration is in the Southeast.

BARGAINING

UAW gears up for jet

UAW members have ratified a five-year contract with McDonnell Douglas Corp. in anticipation that the new MD-95 commercial jetliner will be built in Long Beach, Calif. Their action follows a recent decision by management to move fuselage assembly of the MD-11 from San Diego to that plant, rather than out of state.

The new agreement, which covers workers belonging to Local 148, as well as Locals 1482 in Melbourne, Ark., and 1093 in Tulsa, Okla., features wage increases in the first two years and lump-sum bonuses in the last three. It also creates a point-of-service health plan and what the union calls the "biggest pension increase in history."

Management attributed its decision to keep its work and 2,000 jobs in the troubled economy of Southern California to cooperation with UAW officials and flexibility on the part of workers.

Hertz campaign rolls

Milwaukee Hertz workers overwhelmingly ratified a new four-year contract that benefited from the Teamsters' national campaign to gain good jobs at Hertz.

The contract maintains health benefits, increases wages, limits the use of outside contractors and provides a formula to turn some part-time jobs into full-time.

The national campaign began in September 1994, after Hertz locked out 40 workers in Pittsburgh in an effort to cut their health care and job security. IBT members picketed at Hertz locations in major airports across the country in support of the Pittsburgh workers. Two months later the Pittsburgh lockout ended and workers returned to work with a new contract.

Twenty-four IBT contracts with Hertz expire this year, including three in Detroit covering 258 employees.

Lorillard pact ratified

Members of the Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers Local 317-T in Greensboro, N.C., ratified a new three-year agreement with Lorillard Co. covering some 1,400 employees.

Under the agreement, the tobacco workers will receive lump sum payments of $2,000 in the first year and $2,200 in the second year. In the third year, wages will increase by 2 percent.

The deal also increases retirement benefits, improves life insurance and establishes a new alternate health plan for workers.

ATU averts N.Y. strike

New York City Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani agreed to try joint negotiations with Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1181 and bus companies to avert a strike.

The mayor wanted to send bus contracts out for competitive bidding and do away with lifetime job security for school bus drivers. But after a four-and-a-half-hour meeting, bus company officials told the mayor such a move would not produce the cost savings he was seeking.

Michael Lucivero, an executive board member of the local, said the union would consider changing the rate of pay for new drivers, but the new contract must guarantee workers job security.

World airline unions work together

By David Kameras

Displaying international solidarity, the Teamsters have joined with two foreign unions to prevent Air Canada from pitting its employees against each other.

IBT, together with the Canadian Auto Workers and the Transport and General Workers Union of Britain, have told the carrier that their members will only perform work originating in their respective countries. The agreement primarily would affect reservation agents.

In the past, Air Canada has tried to pry concessions from its CAW members by threatening to move their work to the United States. Increasingly, air carriers have used modern telephone technology to weaken their workers' collective strength by easily sending their jobs electronically to offshore reservation centers.

"We're working together to protect good jobs in a high-tech global workplace," said Teamsters President Ron Carey. "We're increasing the number of good jobs here, going against the industry's tide of downsizing and downgrading airline work."

A recently-signed "open skies" agreement is resulting in explosive growth in U.S.-Canada air routes.

In other airline industry developments:

- A union bailout of USAir moved closer to reality as the Machinists reached a tentative agreement with the ailing carrier.

The airline had earlier reached a tentative concession package with the Air Line Pilots. Negotiations are still going on with the Flight Attendants and the Transport Workers.

While details of the agreement were not immediately available, IAM spokesman Dennis Hitchcock said materials explaining the pact are being prepared and will be sent to the membership.

"These are very complex transactions," he said. "People need to be real certain they understand it."

- The Flight Attendants have kicked off a public education campaign aimed at requiring the use of child-restraint seats on aircraft for children under the age of two.

To support its position, AFA released a study discrediting the Federal Aviation Administration's belief that the seats would divert traffic to automobiles, thereby increasing the risk of injury or death.

"Following the FAA's line of reasoning, the mandatory use of child-restraint seats would result in more infants' deaths," said AFA National President Patricia Friend. She noted that the agency has not considered the impact of proliferating low-cost carriers, who compete directly with auto travel.

A spate of accidents in recent years has convinced attendants on the scene that injuries and deaths they witnessed could have been prevented with the proper safety devices.

"We will not let this issue rest until we have a satisfactory conclusion — until the FAA recognizes that child-restraint seats on airplanes protect infants and save lives," Friend said.

- The FAA is putting in place new rules to improve safety in the cockpits of America's commercial airliners. The regulations, which have met with the approval of ALPA, specify minimum combined experience and training levels for "crew pairing," when two pilots fly together.

- ALPA members have ratified their first-ever contract with America West Airlines, increasing pilots' wages substantially in exchange for some work rule changes. The AFA, which won a representation election last summer, currently is in negotiation for a first contract.

Global companies bleed community dry

Continued from Page 1

Decatur, especially the lockout at Staley, as part of a deliberate effort by "supra-national corporations" to eliminate competition and drive down the living and working standards of their work forces.

The strikes and lockout affect about 30 percent of the manufacturing workers in Decatur and cost the town about $2.3 million a week in lost wages alone, said the study's authors, David C. Ranney and Paul Schwalb of the University of Illinois at Chicago's Center for Urban Economic Development.

"The strike and lockouts are not only costly to the individual workers and their families, they harm the entire community," the study said. Staley's British parent, Tate & Lyle, "has demonstrated that it has no sense of corporate responsibility for its workers or the community it invaded in the course of a hostile takeover," Ranner and Schwalb added.

The UPIU members have been locked out at Staley for 23 months. About 2,000 UAW members walked out at the local Caterpillar plant in June 1994, and 1,200 Rubber Workers struck Bridgestone/Firestone in July.

There are about 4,200 URW members on strike nationwide at Bridgestone/Firestone in what has become the longest strike on record for the union, surpassing a 141-day strike in 1976. The nationwide Caterpillar strike involves some 14,000 UAW members.

Bridgestone/Firestone "permanently" replaced striking workers. Caterpillar is running its plant with managers and temporary hires.

The U.S. Labor Department is considering whether to ban Bridgestone/Firestone from receiving any federal contracts because it used permanent replacements. But that rule would not affect any tax subsidy it receives, including those for enterprise zones.

"These enterprise zones are nothing but corporate welfare," Dhermy said. "And three union busters in Decatur are simply hogs at the trough."

Illinois AFL-CIO President Donald Johnson wrote state officials, vehemently protesting what he called "public policy to give a tax windfall to a company that uses its capital investments to reduce employment."

Meanwhile, talks between the UPIU and Staley are set to resume May 10 in Chicago, Dhermy said. No new talks are scheduled in the Caterpillar strike, said UAW spokesman Roger Kerson. Talks between the URW and Bridgestone/Firestone continued May 2-4 with no progress, said union spokesman Curtis Brown.

The strikers are planning two rallies in Decatur to build support for the unions' campaign for justice. Crystal Lee Sutton, whose life was the subject of the movie "Norma Rae," will speak at a May 20 benefit to raise money for medical costs for the Staley workers and their families.

A mass rally and march are planned for June 25 to show the spirit of solidarity in Decatur.

Them that's got gets more

Executive pay leads world as workers' wages languish

By David Kameras

American workers know every time they balance their checkbooks that real wages have been stagnant or declining for years. But not everybody in the workplace has been suffering.

While employees have been battered by layoffs, "restructuring" and demands for concessions on the pretext that their companies can't otherwise make it in a harsh world, management has been crying all the way to the bank.

Salaries and bonuses for chief executives of major corporations jumped 10 percent last year, the annual Business Week survey shows. At the same time, the average weekly earnings for production workers rose by 2.7 percent, just barely matching the rate of inflation. Out of 742 executives surveyed, a record 537 earned more than $1 million.

"The rise in executive pay also far outran a small rise in the broader Employment Cost Index, which includes benefits as well as changes in wages," noted AFL-CIO economist Frank Parente. "Thus, workers did not share fairly in the wealth they helped create.''

Charles Locke of Morton International, proving once again that "when it rains, it pours," topped the list with total pay of $25.9 million. But he had plenty of company. On average, the CEOs earned $1.4 million in salary and bonus and $1.5 million in long-term compensation, including stock options. That works out to $55,400 a week. The average CEO was paid as much as 109 factory workers.

While American business frequently blames its labor costs for its alleged inability to compete overseas, its CEOs are paid far more generously than its foreign counterparts. This continuing phenomenon may help to explain why 1 percent of American households in 1989 owned nearly 40 percent of the nation's wealth, compared with 18 percent in Great Britain, for example. The top 20 percent control 80 percent of the wealth.

"We are the most unequal industrialized country in terms of income and wealth, and we're growing more unequal faster than the other industrialized countries," said New York University professor Edward N. Wolff.

That concentration of wealth bodes ill for the future.

"When you have a child poverty rate that is four times the average of Western European countries that are our principal industrial competitors, and when those children are a significant part of our future work force, you have to worry about the competitive effects as well as the social-fabric effects," said Robert Greenstein, executive director of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

Unlike their workers, CEOs enjoy perks and golden parachutes, as well as stock options and savings and investment plans to protect them from the hazards of the business cycle that can wipe out their work force.

"The loss of a reliable link between work and reward breeds cynicism and irresponsibility as citizens witness the failure of responsible behavior to pay off like it used to," said Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich. "It inspires resentment and a search for scapegoats. It turns our politics rancorous and ugly. It undermines the civic culture that has long been a secret of America's success."

Many of the executives of companies with the biggest job cuts received the biggest pay raises, according to the Institute for Policy Studies. Edward Brennan of Sears, Roebuck and Co. enjoyed a 198 percent jump in compensation in 1993, to $3.1 million, while 50,000 Sears jobs were cut.

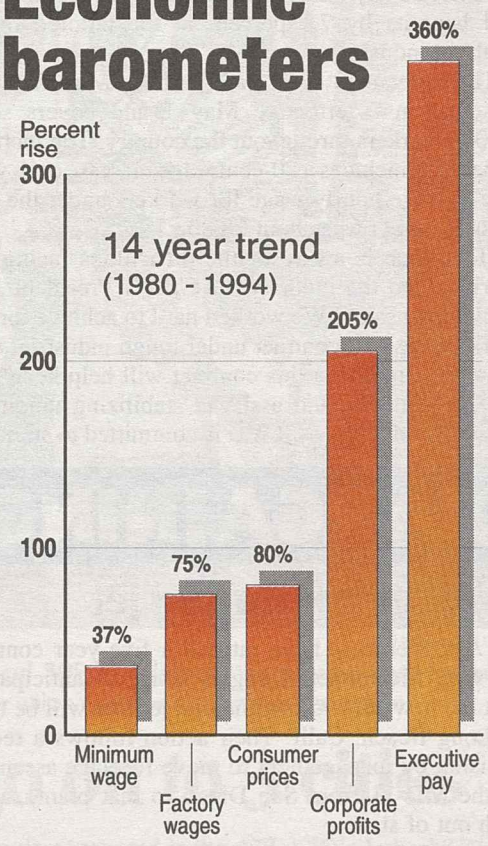
Albert Dunlap of Scott Paper complained that his $1 million salary and bonus was "grossly inadequate," while cutting one-third of his staff at the cost of 11,200 jobs. The Wall Street Journal, noting that Scott bought Dunlap's home for $3.3 million and gave him a 750,000-share stock option, was prompted to ask, "How do you justify that kind of largess? Especially when you must tell employees: 'We don't need you anymore, but thank you very much. I'll keep getting paid.' "

"There is ample evidence that CEOs are often out of touch with the rank and file," Parente said. "Year after year, they enjoy big raises, even during the bad years. They are often rewarded for inflicting punishment on workers in the form of corporate downsizing. They often do not share the pain of workers and judge themselves by a different standard."

Implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement has only sharpened the contrast in status between labor and management. The IPS reported that among the 26 largest U.S. maquiladora employers, the top three U.S. executives averaged 29 percent raises in 1994, amid stagnant wage rates for U.S. workers and plummeting real wages for Mexican workers.

Ford CEO Alexander Trotman got a 320 percent raise, making his $8.1 million in compensation 2,003 times that of the $4,044 for the average Mexican Ford employee.

Economic barometers



U.S. corporations are sending along the lion's share of their profits to executives while shortchanging workers, statistics show. CEO compensation last year jumped 10 percent, while the average weekly earnings for production workers rose by 2.7 percent, just barely matching the rate of inflation.

Factory Orders	
March	-0.1 percent
February	-0.3 percent
Leading Indicators	
March	-0.5 percent
February	-0.2 percent

AFL-CIO NEWSGRAFIC

"This study explodes the myth of NAFTA supporters that the benefits of the agreement would trickle down to workers," said co-authors John Cavanagh and Sarah Anderson. "In order to prevent senior executives from taking all the benefits that trade agreements offer, these agreements must include enforceable provisions to advance worker rights."

Contracts reflect wage stagnation

Collective bargaining settlements in the first quarter covering units of more than 1,000 workers averaged wage increases of 1.9 percent during the first year of the contracts, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported.

The fact that wage increases are not keeping up with the rate of inflation "is certainly disappointing," said AFL-CIO economist John Zalusky. "However, this is only the first quarter of the year, and represents a relatively small number of agreements negotiated."

The second quarter should provide a more detailed picture, with 169 major agreements covering 614,000 workers up for negotiation, largely in construction, telephone communications and electrical products manufacturing, Zalusky pointed out.

An additional 462,000 workers under 70 agreements, many in the railroad, food store and airline industries, are still awaiting completion of the collective bargaining process.

"Much of what is negotiated today is not part of the traditional wage and benefit package," Zalusky said. "Unions are doing a great deal in negotiating education and training programs and improving health care delivery systems, rather than adding benefits."

For the 12 months ending in March, specified wage increases were included in 90 percent of the agreements surveyed, and 7 percent were unchanged. Some 30 percent had contingent pay provisions, such as cost-of-living adjustments and profit-sharing, that would further boost compensation.

Lump-sum payments, which along with COLAs are excluded from the wage data, were added to eight agreements covering 13,000 workers, maintained in 13 pacts for 58,000 workers and dropped in only one agreement for 3,000 workers.

The below-par collective bargaining results were part of the continuing trend throughout the economy in which workers have lost buying power even through inflation has been held in check.

The Employment Cost Index increased 0.8 percent in the first quarter of 1995, 2.9 percent higher than the same point a year earlier, the BLS reported. The modest change to the measure of total compensation costs reflected a sharp reduction in the rate of benefit cost increases.

"For the first time in seven and a half years, benefits have not increased faster than wages," said BLS economist Wayne Shelly, due in part to lower cost increases for health, workers compensation, state unemployment insurance and employer payments to retirement funds.

The Federal Reserve Bank has cited fear of inflation to justify a doubling of its bench mark interest rate over the last year, effectively blocking many working families from owning their own homes and imposing sharply higher monthly payments on others.

However, "we're not going to get significant inflation until (compensation costs) break out of this mold," said economist Robert Dederick, a consultant with Northern Trust Co. in Chicago.

Added Merrill Lynch, the giant Wall Street brokerage house, "The performance of the ECI suggests little upward pressure on inflation in 1995."

— David Kameras

U.S. home health sector is booming

The high cost of hospitalization has helped make home health care the fastest growing segment of the health care services field.

"One of five jobs created in the non-farm economy since 1988 has been in the health service industry," said Laura Freeman, an economist with the Bureau of Labor Statistics. "Within health services, the relatively small home health care industry was a major provider of jobs, growing five times faster than the average of all health industries."

Even when the economy was in a tailspin, the health service industry continued to grow. "During the most recent employment recession, June 1990 through February 1992, employment in the health services industry grew 7.5 percent while employment in the total non-farm economy fell by 1.7 percent," Freeman said.

From 1988 through 1993, home health care employment grew by 16.4 percent annually, compared with 4.3 percent for all health services jobs and 2.8 percent for hospital jobs.

However, since almost a third of home health care workers are designated as aides, they earn less than their hospital colleagues: $10.67 average hourly earnings compared with $14 for hospital workers.

BLS projects home health employment to add 500,000 jobs, a 128 percent increase, between 1992 and 1995.

UNION NEWS

SBA deserts runaway plant

In a victory for the Clothing and Textile Workers, an Illinois bank has withdrawn its application for a federal loan guarantee that would have allowed Schutt Sports Group to move its unionized athletic helmet plant from Knoxville, Tenn., to Salem, Ill.

The move comes two months after ACTWU charged that the U.S. Small Business Administration guarantee, approved in January, was illegal under agency rules prohibiting funds to runaway plants that would nullify labor agreements or cause serious unemployment. ACTWU represents 50 of the company's 70 Knoxville employees.

The withdrawal could force Illinois and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to re-evaluate $800,000 in low-interest community block grant loans to Schutt, the union said. The state of Tennessee also has protested the loans.

"It's bad enough that federal taxpayers' dollars are being used to rob Peter to pay Paul," said ACTWU's Tennessee Director Mark Pitt. "But now it is clear that the deal was improper, and HUD and the State of Illinois must also pull out."

SEIU local strikes back

Members of Service Employees Local 32B-32J lost their jobs cleaning Citibank offices, but not without a fight. The mostly minority cleaning and maintenance workers took their campaign to the parent company's shareholders meeting and distributed flyers outlining the company's "shameful" treatment of workers and customers.

Citibank accepted a low bid from non-union Golden Mark Maintenance to clean its New York City branches. The company's employees earn less than half the union wage level, with virtually no benefits.

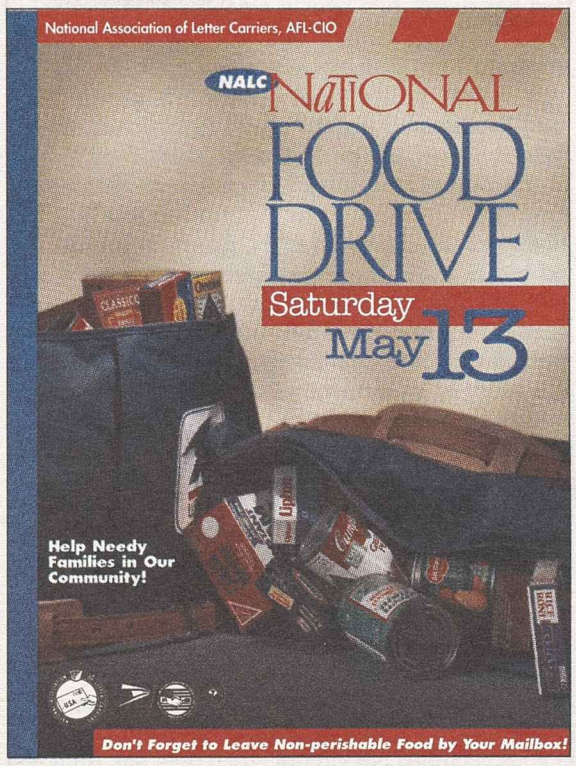
"Citibank's sole concern is the mad dash for penny profits," said Gus Bevona, president of the local, "but we intend to make it take responsibility for its actions."

N.J. workers back IFPTE

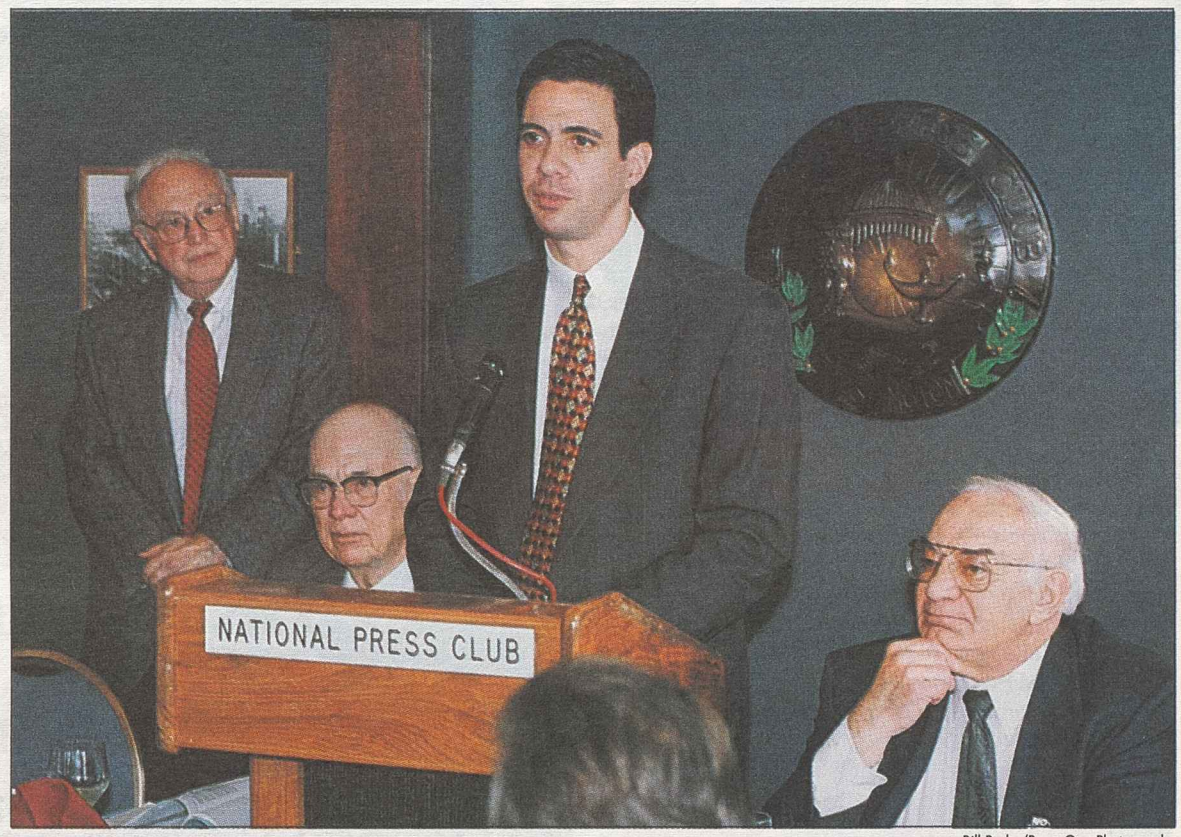
Some 900 Professional and Technical Engineers in Union County, N.J., voted to remain members of the union, resisting a raid by an unaffiliated union.

The United Electrical Workers (UE) represents 100 Union County workers, but reneged on a memorandum of understanding to jointly bargain with the IFPTE, filing a petition for election on the day contract talks were to end.

In rejecting the UE, county workers clearly understood the benefits of being affiliated with "the house of labor," said IFPTE President Paul E. Almeida, who read a letter from AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland at an IFPTE rally. The federation and the union also provided staff to assist the local in organizing for the election.



The Letter Carriers are featuring this poster to call attention to the union's third National Food Drive, set for May 13, which will stock local food banks, pantries and shelters that serve the needy. The NALC expects to exceed last year's record 32 million pounds of food collected from postal customers.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

The Boston Globe's Mitchell Zuckoff accepts The Newspaper Guild's 1994 Heywood Broun Award for the team series "Foul Trade," which uncovered the exploitation in Third World countries by U.S.-based companies. The reporting team received a citation and check for $2,000. Looking on are Morton Mintz, spokesperson for the three panel judges, Harry Culver, award chairman, and Charles Dale, president of TNG. Second-place honors went to Lee Davidson of the Deseret News in Salt Lake City for a series on secret Cold War weapons testing that injured residents, and third place to Jim Morris of the Houston Chronicle for a series on the need for protection against preventable injuries in the building trades.

NEWSMAKERS

Charles Dale has announced his plans to retire as president of The Newspaper Guild in October. Dale, who has been president since 1987, was a member of the Canadian Wire Service Guild prior to joining TNG staff in 1955, and was elected secretary-treasurer in 1979. He was instrumental in putting together the proposed merger of the Guild with the Communications Workers, which awaits membership approval.

Food and Commercial Workers Vice President **Joe Talarico** succeeded retiring Secretary-Treasurer **Jerry Menapace** May 1. Talarico is president of UFCW Local 1 in Utica, N.Y. Menapace is a 41-year veteran of the labor movement, joining the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butchers in 1954. He held a variety of positions until the 1979 merger of the Meat Cutters and the Retail Clerks, when he became a vice president. He was elected secretary-treasurer in 1986.

Also May 1, **Stuart Appelbaum** succeeded **Guy Dickinson** as secretary-treasurer of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union. Applebaum's election was announced by AFL-CIO Vice President **Lenore Miller,** president of RWDSU. Appelbaum served as coordinator of special projects, assistant to the president and vice president of the union. Dickinson had been secretary-treasurer since 1986. RWDSU is in the process of merging with the UFCW.

Lisa M. Lynch, chair of Tufts University's economics and international business division, will replace **Alan B. Krueger** as the Labor Department's chief economist. Meanwhile, **Doug Ross,** the Labor Department's assistant secretary for employment and training, resigned to join the Progressive Foundation in Michigan.

New York State AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer **Paul Cole** has been elected as one of three vice chairs of the National Skills Standards Board. Cole, an AFT member, was appointed to the board by President Clinton.

AWARDS

The Carpenters and the Plumbers and Pipe Fitters have received national recognition for their community service efforts. The Carpenters district council for Seattle and North Puget Sound was selected from a field of more than 3,000 nominations to receive the President's Service Awards. It was honored for building a house for a local non-profit organization. Members of Plumbers Local 190 received an honorable mention for donating their time to the Michigan Department of Social Services for such activities as inspecting furnaces, cleaning and repairing heating equipment and installing free smoke detectors for homeowners in Ann Arbor, Mich.

— Compiled by Muriel H. Cooper

RESOURCES

The AFL-CIO and Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations have issued a call for **papers on union organizing**, which will be presented at the Union/University research conference in April 1996. The deadline for short proposals of 750-1000 words is June 1, 1995. For details, contact Sheldon Friedman, AFL-CIO Department of Economic Research, 815 16th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006; 202/637-5130 or FAX 202/508-6967.

SYMPOSIUM

Labor and the ADA: Keeping Our Members with Disabilities on the Job will be held May 16 at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland. The symposium is sponsored by the AFL-CIO and the labor subcommittee of the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. Contact Susana Gomez at 202/637-5271.

PUBLICATIONS

Giving Birth to Freedom is a 32-page commemorative book of the U.S. trade union delegation to the historic April 1994 election in South Africa. Contributions are $15 each. Contact Mary Ann Forbes, the African American Labor Center, 1925 K St. N.W., Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20006.

Jobs for All: A Plan for the Revitalization of America is a new 136-page book that offers an analysis of the impact of domestic and global economic restructuring on American workers, families and communities. Copies are $12 each. To order, call Apex Press, 800-316-APEX.

The following materials are available from Chicago Women in Trades: **Tools for Success — A Working Woman's Manual for Success**, a manual to help women survive and thrive in traditionally all-male environments, and **Breaking New Ground: Worksite 2000**, a report on the conditions of women in the trades. Copies are $6 each for the manual and $7 each for the report. Contact Chicago Women in Trades, 37 South Ashland, Chicago, Ill. 60607; 312/942-1444.

VIDEO

Paycheck Economics is a new video and booklet designed to demonstrate the value of a high-wage economy that brings workers a fair share of the profits they generate. The materials are based on a presentation by Economic Policy Institute President Jeff Faux to the Steelworkers Convention. Copies are $10 each. Contact the USWA Membership Development Department, Five Gateway Center, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15222.

Workers Memorial Day: Renewed fight for living

By Muriel H. Cooper

The fresh memory of more than 100 federal workers who were killed in Oklahoma City made the seventh annual observance of Workers Memorial Day even more somber.

Many events nationwide included a moment of silence for the bombing victims and their families. The observance traditionally has been a time to mourn for the dead, but it also has been a time to fight for the living. That admonition is particularly true in 1995, when there is a wholesale legislative assault on job safety and health protections.

During a regional rally in Greensboro, N.C., speakers vowed that the 25 workers killed three years ago when they couldn't get out locked fire doors at the Imperial Food Products factory in Hamlet, N.C., did not die in vain.

Many of the participants were visibly upset with Rep. Cass Ballenger (R-N.C.), chairman of the House Economic and Educational Opportunities subcommittee on work force protection. Ballenger, whose home is less than two hours' drive from Hamlet, has said he would introduce legislation to roll back worker safety and health protection on the state and federal levels.

"There are people who cannot remember three years ago when 25 people died," said Charles Jeffress, who heads the state's Occupational Safety and Health division. He condemned the callousness of congressional Republicans whose actions would encourage tragedies like the Hamlet fire.

The Greensboro rally was one of four major regional events held by the AFL-CIO this year to spotlight the danger in Republican efforts to dismantle OSHA. The others were in Boston, Los Angeles and Trenton, N.J. — the latter rally marking another recent tragedy, a fatal explosion at a chemical plant in Lodi, N.J.

In Greensboro, the AFL-CIO's job safety director warned that Ballenger's bill would cripple OSHA, abolish the separate Mine Safety and Health Administration and eliminate the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health.

"We have a situation right now in the Congress of the United States where they have launched an all-out attack on working people," said Peg Seminario, who also conducted a satellite media tour with reporters from around the country.

"They want a voluntary compliance with no enforcement unless workers are killed or injured. That doesn't make sense," she said.

The plan to fold MSHA into OSHA was assailed by Mine Workers President Richard L. Trumka, who spoke with reporters from throughout the nation's coalfields. "This is not the agenda of working-class Americans," he said. "We didn't send you to Washington to make America's coal mines more dangerous than they already are."

More than 6,000 workers are killed by workplace injuries last year and more than 50,000 die from occupational diseases. Since its birth in 1970, OSHA has cut the job fatality rate in half and saved 140,000 lives.

Under the Republican-backed proposal, OSHA's mission would change from that of a regulator to a management consultant with a weakened penalty and inspection system, Seminario said. As a result, the agency would lack the power or budget to make much of a difference.

Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich said it's moral issue. Besides the government's legally mandated role in protecting workers, businesses have an obligation "to keep their workplaces safe and their employees protected," he said.

Workers still have some friends in Congress who will fight to maintain a strong OSHA, Rep. Melvin Watt (D-N.C.) told the Greensboro rally.

In Boston, workers testified at a hearing chaired by Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) that focused on problems associated with indoor air quality and repetitive strain injuries. At least 167 nurses required workers' compensation aid and 75 remain off the job as the result of poor indoor air, said Kathleen Sperrazza, head of the state's nurses association.

In New Jersey, workers rallied in memory of the latest victims of job-related deaths. On April 21, two members of the Clothing and Textile Workers and three supervisors were killed by an explosion at Napp Technologies in Lodi.

Workers in Los Angeles surrounded themselves with wreaths and enlarged pictures of workers who were injured or killed on the job.

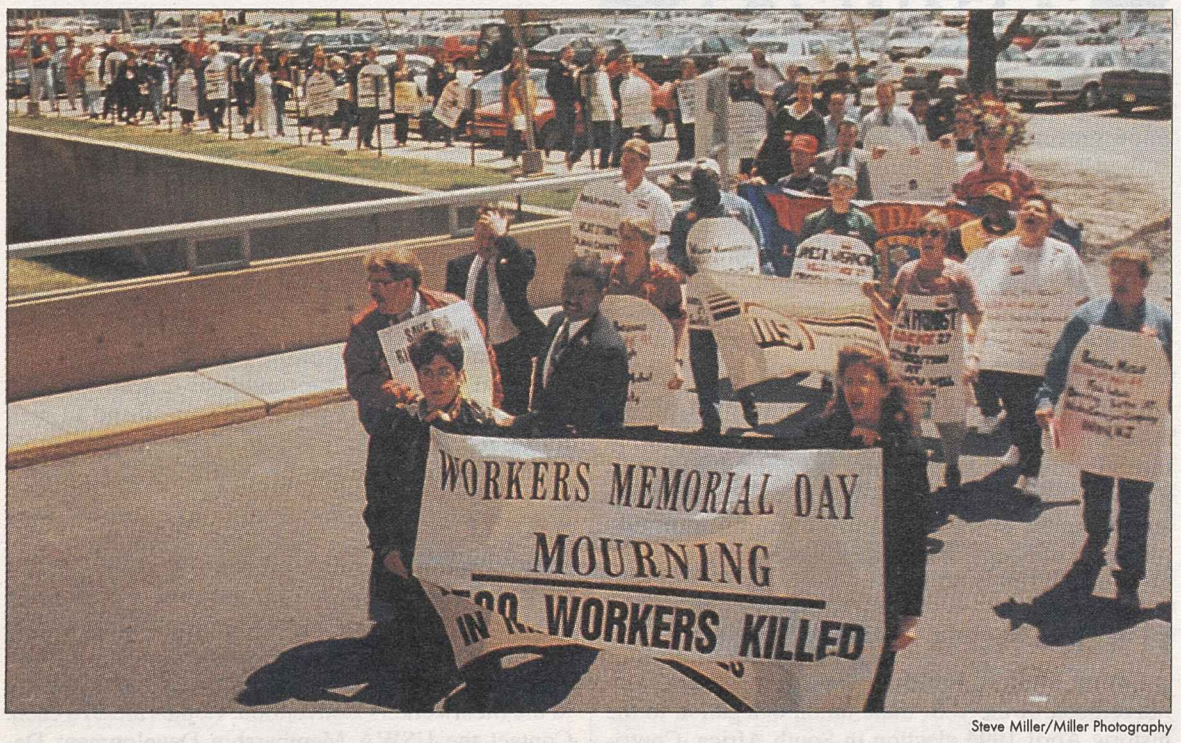
OSHA Administrator Joseph A. Dear participated in the dedication of a monument to Indiana workers killed or injured on the job. The limestone-based monument depicting three workers with hands entwined around the AFL-CIO logo is located near the state capitol in Indianapolis. Dear later spoke at a rally in Milwaukee.

In New York, Rep. Major R. Owens (D-N.Y.) conducted a public fact-finding hearing on job safety. The day's events also included tree-planting, candlelighting ceremonies, plaque dedications and 5K runs.



H. Scott Hoffman

Workers pause for a moment of silence for victims of the Oklahoma City bombing during a Workers Memorial Day observance in Greensboro, N.C. The event focused on plans by North Carolina Rep. Cass Ballenger, who heads a House subcommittee on work force protections, to gut OSHA protections.



Steve Miller/Miller Photography

Workers marched behind a New Jersey Industrial Union Council banner from the Statehouse to the Department of Health to present petitions demanding that the state's chemical Right-To-Know laws not be gutted.

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Peg Seminario, AFL-CIO safety director, addresses Workers Memorial Day rally in Greensboro, N.C. **See FOCUS, Pages 8-9.**

GOP budget plans add to 'list of horrors'

Council studies ways to fend off assault

By Michael Byrne

Reviewing the "list of horrors" facing labor in Congress over the next several months, the Executive Council intensified the AFL-CIO Stand UP campaign, which stirred grass-roots activism across the country during the Easter recess.

The Republican leadership's assault on worker rights and protections has entered a new phase with slash-and-burn budget proposals, AFL-CIO Legislative Director Peggy Taylor told the council. She warned that labor will have to double its efforts to fend off anti-worker initiatives that may be concealed behind the complicated process.

Describing the coordinated Stand UP campaign, Taylor and Richard Walsh, director of the federation's Committee on Political Education, showed how the Republican broadside has brought unions together in their legislative battles to protect workers. They also reviewed poll results that point to public disaffection with GOP goals.

"We have a list of horrors before us," Taylor said. "But this so-called Republican revolution is not what the voters want. People want change that makes government work for them, not change that tears down government."

The Stand UP campaign gives unionists a grass-roots vehicle to fight the destructive GOP course. It was designed, AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland told a news conference, "to be a rallying point and a symbol of our efforts to strengthen our work at the local level."

"It's at the local level where it counts, where members of Congress are elected and where the voices of constituents reside," Kirkland said. "We want to make sure that in this cacophony of different voices, the voice of working people is loud and strong and persistent year in and year out."

That persistent voice was registered in Columbus, Ohio, during the Easter recess with a 10-day vigil outside the office of House Budget Committee Chairman John Kasich, who has refused to meet with representatives of the labor movement for the past 12 years, Walsh noted.

Kasich was among 11 key Republicans on whom union members focused recess activities, either because of their leadership positions or because they were freshmen who thus far have shown no interest in either workers or their unions, Walsh said. Both print and electronic media advertising in those dis-

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Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

Oklahoma City blast survivor Jane Graham, president of Government Employees Local 3138, tells the Executive Council about the terror and the heroism in the wake of the terrorist bombing. **See Story, Page 5.**

Donahue to retire in October

Kirkland announces plan to stand for re-election

By Rex Hardesty

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland will seek a ninth term at the AFL-CIO Convention in New York in October and Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue will not, they told the Executive Council at its May meeting.

Kirkland told reporters after the May 9 council session that, "If nominated, I will stand. If elected, I will serve."

Donahue said he would retire at the end of his eighth term in October. In a letter to council members just before the meeting, he said, "I have enjoyed a full trade union career at the local union, international and federation level and have been privileged to work with and for people who have made that work a joy."

No one except Kirkland has declared as a candidate, but AFSCME President Gerald W. McEntee announced that a group of 11 AFL-CIO vice presidents intended to run an opposing slate.

To consider candidates for secretary-treasurer, Kirkland appointed five vice presidents — George Kourpias of the Machinists, John Barry of the Electricians, Albert Shanker of the AFT, Vincent Sombrotto of the Letter Carriers and Doug Dority of the Food and Commercial Workers — to serve with him on a selection committee.

In his retirement letter, Donahue said, "I have for some time considered retiring at the end of this term. Lane and I discussed this possibility last fall before all the current debate began.

"It seems to me useful to restate that position now by way of clarifying the current debate and enabling members of the council to begin to consider those who are, or will be, candidates for the office of president and secretary-treasurer — without having to speculate about my intentions.

"In a more personal sense, I have been injected into

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Japan sanctions applauded as workers press trade issues

By David Kameras

The AFL-CIO hailed the Clinton administration's decision to move forward with trade sanctions on Japanese auto products, noting that after months of talks, "it is now time for results."

Japanese trade officials have been unwilling to budge on opening up their highly restricted market for autos and auto parts, forcing the administration to use the sanctions card against such items as luxury automobiles.

The fact that the White House is "prepared to impose very serious sanctions is without precedent and very significant," Mark Anderson, director of the AFL-CIO Task Force on Trade, told the Executive Council in a wide-ranging report on a number of critical trade issues.

"Sadly, the concerns that all of us had during the number of years of debate over the North American Free Trade Agreement have been borne out big time," Anderson told the council, pointing to the newly created trade deficit with Mexico and the continuing difficulty of getting a hearing on worker rights in trade.

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue also briefed the council on an upcoming meeting of trade union leaders to be held in conjunction with the hemispheric meeting of labor ministers in Denver, and updated the legislative push for "fast-track" negotiating authority for trade negotiations with Chile.

Pointing to the mounting U.S. trade deficit with Japan, the federation has consistently supported the "results-oriented" U.S. stance in negotiations with that country. Twenty months of talks have produced little progress.

"Japan remains unwilling to take the steps necessary to bring genuine market access and concrete results in a sector in which Japan has a $37 billion trade surplus with the U.S.," said U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor, citing continued discrimination against foreign manufacturers of autos and parts.

Kantor pointed out that Japan uses a number of

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ORGANIZING

The following organizing victories were reported to the Executive Council by Service Employees President John J. Sweeney, chair of the AFL-CIO Organizing Committee:

- The Office and Professional Employees, by an 11 to 1 margin, won the right to represent 1,110 professional employees in Dade County, Fla.
- An ice storm didn't keep away some 250 home care health workers as they voted for representation by the Service Employees Local 880 in Chicago.
- In its first organizing attempt in Albuquerque, N.M., the Broadcast Employees of the Communications Workers won at KOAT-TV by 44 to 11.
- The Flight Attendants won elections with Mountain West Airlines and Jetstream International Airways.
- The Teamsters were successful in organizing 225 parole officers, sergeants, detectives and emergency communication officers in Daytona Beach, Fla.
- The Clothing and Textile Workers won an election in Mukwonhuo, Wis., where 75 workers are employed at HP Industries.
- The Steelworkers organized 100 workers at Eagle Roofing Products in California. Meanwhile, 3,400 workers at AK Steel, an independent union, voted to affiliate with USWA.
- The Paperworkers will represent 40 workers at Appleton Supply Co. in Appleton, Wis.
- The Food and Commercial Workers will represent 265 workers at the Hanover Food Co. in Delaware.
- The 1,035 graduate teaching assistants at the University of Kansas voted for the AFT.
- The Operating Engineers organized 79 workers at a cement plant in Riverside, Calif.
- The Machinists organized 40 workers at the Image Contracting Co. in Virginia Beach, Va.
- AFSCME organized 130 workers at Shady Lane, a nursing home in Monitowol, Wis.

Among other recent organizing victories:

- The UFCW will represent workers at the Green Acre Foods poultry plant in Nacogdoches, Texas.
- Workers at the Yussa/Exide battery plant in Sumter, S.C., voted 197-185 for representation by the Electronic Workers.
- More than 600 workers in Kentucky, Missouri and Michigan voted to join the UAW — at the Electro-Wire Co. in Campbellsburg, Ky., Douglas & Lomason Inc. in Excelsior Springs, Mo., and Value Behavioral Health in Southfield, Mich.
- The Mine Workers gained new members when workers represented by a company union at the DuPont plant in Martinsville, Va., voted to merge with the union. The workers were members of the Martinsville Nylon Employees' Council Corp.
- The UMWA also won an election by employees of Green Leaf Enterprise Inc. in Blairsville, Pa., a national wholesaler that produces flowers, vegetables and other plants used by landscapers. The 68-16 victory is the union's first in the horticultural industry.
- AFSCME Council 26 will represent workers at the Rural Business and Cooperative Development Service (RBCDS), a new agency created by the reorganization of the Department of Agriculture. The vote was 55-15.
- The National Labor Relations Board upheld an election victory by SEIU Local 250 at the Crestwood Convalescent Hospital in Vallejo, Calif. The board overruled an attempt by the hospital to overturn the election, which the union won 87-46.

Union ready to climb into ring

Ex-fighter in decade-long battle to organize boxers

By Muriel H. Cooper

A quick right-left combination may protect a fighter in the ring, but a union card could be the best defense.

That message has been delivered for the past decade by Paul Johnson, Irv Abramson and Roy Foreman, brother of heavyweight champion George Foreman, as they work to organize boxers.

"Of the seven major sports — football, baseball, basketball, hockey, golf, tennis and boxing — only boxing provides no pension plans," said Johnson, who heads the Boxing Organizing Committee. "Only boxing provides no health benefits. Only boxing provides no compensation for career-ending injuries. Only boxing has no association to provide services for its athletes."

Johnson, a former middleweight boxer who claims he was cheated out of his pay, said the idea of merging unionism with professional boxing makes sense. "Boxing is a sport and professional sports are businesses," said Johnson. "A boxing union will allow fighters to participate in the business of their sport just like other athletes."

Professional boxers number about 1,200. Some work as sparring partners or practice trainees with big-name boxers. Others fight on undercards, four- or six-round bouts that are the equivalent of a warmup act for entertainers.

Many fighters just don't get paid for those preliminary fights — no matter what they have been promised. Too often, they find themselves broke — an ironic outcome for workers who have as strong a work ethic as any workers anywhere.

Consequently, boxers are left behind by history — still suffering the kind of exploitation many working people faced in past decades, but overcame. "It was real easy to take advantage of workers, to work them all day and not compensate them," said Johnson, a member of the Transportation-Communication Union.

"The workers started to realize that there has never been a venue for fighters" to have a voice in their profession. "We're saying, 'give the fighter his due pay, then take another amount back to pay the fighters who sparred with him and then put some in the pension or scholarship fund,'" he said.

In addition to basic benefits like health insurance that go with a union card, boxers should also have a say in merchandising and licensing agreements, as other professional athletes do, Johnson said.

Johnson has received funding and support from the UAW and the Federation of Professional Athletes, which represents players in the National Football League. "The FPA seeks to assist any group of professional athletes trying to organize to improve the quality of other workers' lives," said union President Gene Upshaw.

A union could form a much-needed mutual relationship with the ranking sanction groups, state commissions, promoters and managers, all of whom have a say over the boxer's career.

"We would like to see the ranking sanction groups offer a clear path that would allow boxers to fight for the world championship based on performance as opposed to political agendas," Johnson said.

A boxers union also could bargain with the state commissions on minimum rates, again as is the case for entertainment figures and professional athletes. A union could bargain with state boxing commissions on standardizing the rules, which boxers think is one of their biggest problems.



Joseph Daszkiewicz

Paul Johnson talks union to boxers at a gym.

"Years ago, promoters did all of the leg work to put on fights, including reserving sites and printing tickets," he said. "But the sport has changed, with the emphasis put on broadcast fights like HBO and pay-per-view sales. Promoters need to realize that their roles have changed.

"A union will not take away from ranking sanctions, the state commissions or the promoters," he said. "This would not threaten the relationship of managers. It would be the same type of relationship that owners and coaches have with the football union. All it would do is allow the fighters to collectively voice their concerns and take care of their business."

Johnson said he would like to present a charter from the FPA during a major fight as the first round in his organizing campaign. Unlike other professional athletes who call a specific stadium or arena "home," boxers' jobsites are whatever ring they fight in.

Johnson said the publicity from the fight would be used to get the message out that the time is here to organize. He's also counting on the verbal endorsement from ranked contenders and other highly respected boxers.

Boxers have a feeling of camaraderie. "If we get the support of people they know and respect — like champs, ex-champs and contenders — we feel that will go a long way toward giving them the confidence to go forward and be a part of this. We want to make sure they know they are not alone. No one should be scared to be represented."

Johnson says there are major organizational and financial obstacles ahead, but "we hope to have people in the major gyms that will be able to answer questions, similar to the way the UAW has stewards in a plant. Those representatives also would be able to sign up members."

This process is quick and easy and perfect for the athletes, he said. "This is a unique way of organizing, but we're willing to try new approaches. You can't have solutions to the problems in boxing until the fighters have input," he said.

"We talk to gym fighters all of the time," he said. "When we talk to underfighters on undercards, everybody, without exception, was enthused about giving fighters their own organization. Joining the union is a great message."

AFL-CIO NEWS

Director of Information: Rex Hardesty

Editor: Michael Byrne

Assistant Editors: Candice Johnson, David Kameras, James B. Parks

Staff Writers: Muriel H. Cooper, Mike Hall Colleen M. O'Neill, Sharolyn A. Rosier

Graphics/Layout: Stan Hitt, Hindi M. Fracasse

AFL-CIO Headquarters: 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006
Telephone: (202) 637-5010
CompuServe: 76004, 3601

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LEGISLATION

Democrats vow to fight Davis-Bacon repeal

By Mike Hall

Senate Democrats have promised to filibuster a bill that would repeal the Davis-Bacon Act requirements for 165,000 miles of National Highway System projects. If the filibuster fails, the Clinton administration has threatened to veto the bill.

The bill, S. 440, did not include a Davis-Bacon ban when introduced. But at the Senate Environment and Public Works markup, Republicans offered it as an amendment to the $6 billion bill and it was approved by an 8-7 vote May 10.

The amendment's supporters ignored warnings from the administration, several senators and the construction industry as well as praise for the law from the Republican mayor of Los Angeles.

"We believe it affords essential protections to workers employed on federal construction contracts and benefits legitimate contractors and, in the bigger picture, the taxpayers," said Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich. "If an amendment is added to S. 440 weakening the basic coverage of the Davis-Bacon Act, I would recommend that the president veto the bill."

Sen. Max Baucus (D-Mont.) told committee members that repeal "would hurt middle-income workers and the families they support. If we repeal the requirement that the federal government pay the prevailing local wage on highway contracts, it will not reduce the size of the bureaucracy. It will not cut a single piece of red tape. It will not increase government efficiency.

"It will do one thing only. It will reduce the wages of construction workers . . . I just can't understand why we'd want to do that. In recent years the average construction wage has fallen, not risen.

"At a time when we're concerned about the decline of good jobs for skilled workers, it just doesn't make sense to drive down construction wages," he said, adding that the amendment would endanger the entire bill. The GOP was "engaged in a largely symbolic exercise," he said.

Earlier, six other senators warned those who backed the Davis-Bacon attack they would filibuster the bill on the floor until those provisions were removed.

"We support the reform of the Davis-Bacon Act and will soon introduce a comprehensive reform bill. But we are strongly opposed to repeal of the Davis-Bacon Act and its application to any type of federal construction," the six wrote.

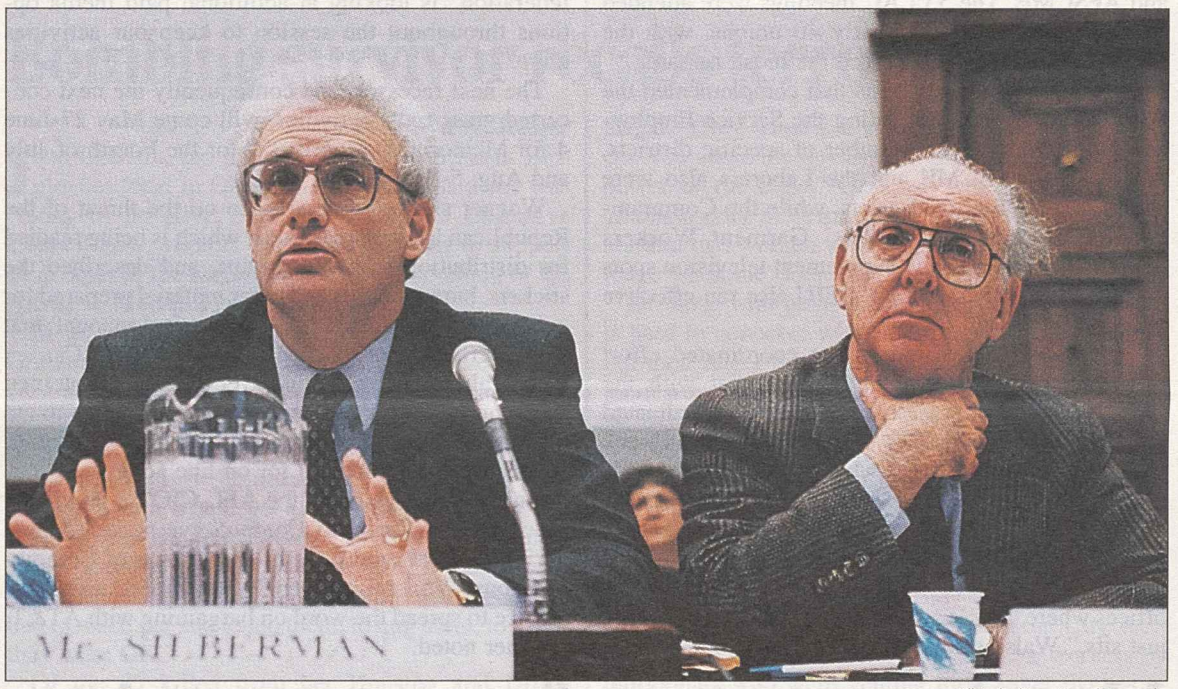
They added that if the committee adopted the amendment, "We will insist on extended debate." Signing the letter were Sens. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.), Christopher J. Dodd (D-Conn.), Paul Simon (D-Ill.), Barbara A. Mikulski (D-Md.), Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) and Paul Wellstone (D-Minn.).

"Prevailing wage laws. . . have attracted skilled labor with expertise and experience to complete projects on time and within budget," said Los Angeles Mayor Richard G. Riordan (R) in a statement entered into the Congressional Record. "Those inside the Washington Beltway who would eliminate Davis-Bacon are shortsighted in their thinking."

Riordan praised the Davis-Bacon contractors and construction workers who are repairing Los Angeles' heavily damaged infrastructure following the Northridge earthquake in January 1994.

No floor date has been set for the highway bill.

Both the House and Senate Republican-crafted budget resolutions call for repeal of the act as well. But the actual repeal bills, H.R. 500, reported by the Workforce Protection Subcommittee, and S. 141, by the Labor and Human Resources Committee, are not expected to move soon.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

David Silberman, who heads the AFL-CIO labor law task force, testifies before Congress along with David Brody, a labor historian and retired professor at the University of California-Davis.

AFL-CIO: Don't revive company unions

By James B. Parks

The so-called TEAM Act is a sham that would allow employers to create the form but not the substance of joint decision making while maintaining complete authority over the workplace, the AFL-CIO charged.

"Why should non-union employers be permitted to handpick or otherwise dominate employee representatives who deal with the employer with respect to the terms of employment?" asked David Silberman, who heads the AFL-CIO's labor law task force. "Why should those who speak for the employees be under the thumb of management?"

Silberman, testifying before the House Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee, said that "today's managers may want to give their employees more responsibility . . . and they are free to do so under current law. But the very last thing that management desires is a genuinely empowered work force — that is, a work force that is able to deal with the employer on an equal footing in determining the terms of their employment."

The misnamed Teamwork for Employees and Management Act, S. 295 and H.R. 743, introduced by Sen. Nancy L. Kassebaum (R-Kan.) and Rep. Steve Gunderson (R-Wis.), would lift the 60-year-old ban on certain types of company-sponsored employee committees by amending Section 8(a)(2) of the National Labor Relations Act.

The bill contains no safeguards to prevent employers from dominating the employee committees and allows management to circumvent existing employee groups, including unions, in discussing the terms of employment, Silberman said. All this could lead to a return to the company unions of the 1920s and 1930s, which the NLRA was designed to eliminate.

He disputed Republican contentions that the NLRB decision in the Electromation case made the bill necessary. "The case had nothing to do with work teams, quality circles, or any of the other forms of legitimate employee involvement that are supposedly under legal attack. Rather, what was at issue in Electromation was an old-fashioned company union, no different than the councils and committees that employers created and controlled prior to 1935 (when the NLRA was passed)."

The members of the Dunlop Commission unanimously oppose the TEAM Act, said the chairman, former Labor Secretary John T. Dunlop. The presidential commission recommended that section 8(a)(2) be amended to "remove the uncertainty" over the formation of employee involvement plans, while preserving the prohibition against employer-dominated company unions, he said. But they oppose the GOP-sponsored TEAM Act which "we would not countenance a minute for a lot of reasons," he said.

The act would permit a company with a collective bargaining agreement to set up an employee involvement plan without the consent of the bargaining representative. "We're strongly opposed to that," he said.

The commissioners also objected to the bill because it would permit employers to set up an employee committee to counteract a union organizing campaign. They also are concerned that employee involvement might multiply within an organization to the extent that they "constitute the equivalent of a union," Dunlop said.

CAPITOL DIGEST

House Republicans used their majority muscle to pass a budget resolution that requires working families to pay more for Medicare and higher education in order to fund tax breaks for the wealthy.

The May 18 vote was on a budget resolution calling for some $1.4 trillion in spending cuts that included more than $450 billion slashed from Medicare and Medicaid. It also included repeal of the Davis-Bacon Act, massive cuts in OSHA and Mine Safety and Health Administration funds, huge cuts in anti-poverty and mass transit programs and the elimination of entire government departments, agencies and hundreds of programs.

Minority Leader Rep. Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.) called the GOP package "so much more reckless, so much more extreme than any budget that has ever come before."

The AFL-CIO estimated that with the Medicare cuts, America's retired and elderly would end up paying an extra $3,500 during the next seven years and nearly $900 a year or more in out-of-pocket costs by the year 2002.

Massive cuts in the student loan program would mean workers and their children would have to pay thousands of dollars more for a college education or not go to college at all.

The $340 billion tax cut passed by the House primarily benefits corporations and people earning more than $100,000. In some cases, those with $200,000 annual incomes could see their taxes drop by more than $11,000. But families earning between $30,000 and $50,000 would save only about $569.

The Senate version of the budget resolution, expected to be voted on before Memorial Day, does not include a tax cut package, but would use the supposed $170 billion in savings to pay for an unspecified tax cut plan.

The budget resolution's $51 billion cut in transportation programs is an "irresponsible and senseless degradation of our nation's transportation system," said AFL-CIO Transportation Trades Department President Ron Carey, president of the Teamsters.

Those cuts include elimination of the Interstate Commerce Commission, Amtrak and mass transit subsidies, privatizing air traffic control and slashing highway and airport programs.

Elsewhere on Capitol Hill:

STRIKEBREAKERS — President Clinton's executive order barring the government from doing business with firms that use permanent replacement workers survived the most recent challenge.

House and Senate conferees dropped provisions overturning the order from the rescissions bill, which cuts some $17 billion in previously approved federal spending.

— Compiled by Mike Hall

Workers' voice loud and clear in key districts

Continued from Page 1

tricts helped to spotlight their anti-worker records.

Kasich and Sen. Pete Domenici (R-N.M.) have introduced budget resolutions that would have a devastating impact on workers and their families, Taylor noted. Both proposals call for steep cuts in Medicare and higher education, while the Kasich version includes outrageous tax breaks for the wealthy.

The proposed budget cuts are likely to be highly unpopular, according to preliminary data presented to the council by pollster Geoff Garin. Medicare and Social Security are jealously guarded by the American people, as are pension security, equal pay for women and efforts to improve worker health and safety, Garin told the council.

Union members assign even more priority to those issues, but also are particularly concerned about attacks on the 40-hour workweek and the trend toward part-time jobs and companies moving overseas, the poll shows.

Those issues register well with the general public, the council was told, but the selling job is more difficult when the issue is just as devastating to workers but not as easily understood as the 40-hour week. Consequently, it's up to workers and their unions to spread the word on the importance of the Davis-Bacon prevailing wage law, job training, the privatization craze, or the so-called "TEAM" Act to permit company unions.

Many Republican legislators also do not understand those issues, which makes the grass-roots Stand UP campaign so crucial, Taylor said. Since the November election, when many new Republicans swept into the House and Senate, labor has been trying to reach out to moderates of every stripe, explaining the importance of worker issues.

All 127 legislative action committees sought meetings with legislators during the recess, with 55 members of Congress agreeing to those meetings. Others have scheduled meetings for later, although some, like Kasich, have refused to meet with labor representatives.

Under the Stand UP campaign, Walsh explained, COPE regional directors have been given the additional responsibility of coordinating the LAC meetings. "Part of the process is educating members of Congress, part is communicating with our members."



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

Legislative Director Peggy Taylor: "Grass-roots campaign depends on improved communication."

There were full-time coordinators in place in the 11 selected districts, Walsh noted, including three from affiliated unions — the Mine Workers, Steelworkers and AFSCME. The 55 LAC meetings were attended by 1,000 activists from nearly 40 unions, with the Electrical Workers represented the most, he said.

Some unions ran programs that complemented the AFL-CIO campaign, including the Service Employees and Teamsters in a number of specific districts, Walsh said. AFSCME and the Laborers also were active in a number of districts, while the Communications Workers and Ladies' Garment Workers bought newspaper ads to supplement television spots purchased by the AFL-CIO. SEIU also ran effective radio ads, he said.

Walsh and Taylor praised the coordinated effort that went into the campaigns. "We met with the grass-roots activists, shared strategy and coordinated activity," Walsh said. "We will meet again this week with the field people to see what works, what doesn't, what good ideas we can take into the May recess."

The biggest problem, as in the November election, is getting material into the hands of individual union members. "We have to get past the various union offices where there's a risk the information sometimes just sits," Walsh said.

The key to the process, Walsh and Taylor explained, is improved communication — both internally through each union and externally through the general media.

To that end, the council was told by Bill Wagner, director of the Labor Institute of Public Affairs, the federation "is looking at additional paid media options throughout the session to keep our activities alive."

The next recesses, and consequently the next concerted grass roots activities, will come May 27-June 4 for Memorial Day, July 1-9 for the Fourth of July and Aug. 5-Sept. 5.

Wagner showed a new video on the threat of the Republican leadership agenda, which is being readied for distribution to union groups, and described the stickers, bumper strips and other material prepared for union activists, including a campaign manual that features fliers, fact sheets and a listing of LACs.

"We also are developing a web site on the Internet, our own 'home page,'" he said. "We are trying to tap into the 32 million people who browse the Internet, where there is a potential for on-line activism."

Union members using the AFL-CIO's LaborNET, a designated section of CompuServe, have doubled during the past month, with the addition of Communications Workers and IBEW members using the service to spread the word on bargaining with AT&T, Wagner noted.

Medicare, Medicaid key issues at conference on aging

By Colleen M. O'Neill

Preserving Medicare and Medicaid should move to the top of the agenda for those lawmakers who listen carefully to the voice of the people represented at the landmark May 2-5 White House Conference on Aging.

The overwhelming majority of the delegates to the conference made plain their support for protecting and strengthening those programs through passage of an AFL-CIO-initiated resolution.

The initiative was among the top six of 39 approved by the 2,200 delegates. Its passage provided an unqualified endorsement to the approach taken by President Clinton, who told delegates the right way to strengthen Medicare and Medicaid would be to contain costs as part of a sensible, overall health care reform proposal that worked for everyone.

In passing Resolution 145, the delegates opposed massive cuts to Medicare and Medicaid being proposed by Republicans in Congress and called for real health care reform, with savings used to strengthen the programs and expand coverage. No additional costs should be borne by beneficiaries, and the quality and choice of provider should be maintained, the conference said.

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland lauded Clinton's address, noting that Clinton had steadfastly pursued the goal of comprehensive health care reform, "only to be obstructed by the same forces who now cite a Medicare 'crisis' as reason to cut Medicare while they enact tax cuts for the wealthy."

"The AFL-CIO will continue to fight to protect Medicare," Kirkland's statement said. "We will continue to resist any effort to punish the middle class for the nation's failure to face up to its health care problems."



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

Postal Workers President Moe Biller talks with delegates during the White House Conference on Aging. Biller and Gloria Johnson of the Electronic Workers led some 200 labor delegates at the conference.

President Moe Biller of the Postal Workers and Vice President Gloria Johnson of the Electronic Workers led the 200-member labor delegation, composed of representatives from 30 states and 26 unions. The 1995 conference was the fourth ever held, the first in 14 years and the last of this century.

The federation also was the only organization at the conference representing both current workers and retirees.

"Events such as the White House conference demonstrate resiliency and strong support for these programs, the jewels of our social programs," AFL-CIO Employee Benefits Director Gerald M. Shea told the Executive Council.

"Our Social Security Committee and Health Care Committee have been stressing that there is intergenerational solidarity on Social Security," he reported.

Events on either side of the conference gave striking testimony to the message of solidarity. More than 50 people gathered on a dreary, rainy Tuesday before the conference opened for a windblown outdoor news conference on Capitol Hill featuring young and old and a short passing of the "Torch of Commitment" to Social Security and Medicare, symbolic of the passing of time and the need for social programs.

The week after the conference, nearly 100 people gathered again on the Hill — but this time for the first Senate Finance Committee markup. Labor wants to make sure it is known that:

- The nearly $300 billion in Medicare cuts being proposed by congressional Republicans amount to a back-door raid on Social Security.
- Not only would seniors and retirees have to pay more; current workers would see their insurance premiums rise as hospitals and doctors raise prices for everyone else to make up for reduced Medicare income.
- Coupled with Medicare cuts, the Republicans also seek huge cuts in Medicaid. Yet, two-thirds of Medicaid dollars are spent on services for the elderly and disabled, primarily nursing home and home health coverage.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

AFGE Local 3138 President Jane Graham talks with reporters after meeting with the Executive Council.

Bombing survivor recalls terror, heroism

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

Jane Graham, the president of a Government Employees local in Oklahoma City who said she was "lucky to be alive," told the AFL-CIO Executive Council how workers had come together to support each other in the wake of the terrorist bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building.

In an emotional recitation of the tragic events, Graham thanked the labor leaders for their help. Despite suffering a concussion and back and neck injuries from the blast, Graham went back to work almost immediately, providing counseling and moral support to victims' families.

"Counselers would go to individuals' homes and family members were brought in to talk with survivors," said the 56-year-old mother of three, who brought pictures of some of her friends who died. "We had to reach out and touch them, to hug them, to know they were OK."

Of the 35 killed from her Housing and Urban Development office, 13 were members of Graham's AFGE Local 3138. Of the union's executive board, only Graham and a disabled member who was home at the time survived the blast, which killed 168 people in all.

"I had been with the treasurer just before it happened," she said. "We had just parted ways."

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland saluted Graham for her heroism in the wake of the blast, as well as other trade unionists like "the AFSCME members from the emergency unit, the Fire Fighters and the many building trades workers who rushed in to help."

Among the dead was a Rubber Workers business agent checking into benefits for Bridgestone/Firestone strikers and the daughter of a local Sheet Metal Workers officer, who was the sister of an Operating Engineers local officer. UAW members at the Oklahoma City General Motors plant lost several family members, as did two members of the Communications Workers.

UAW President Owen Bieber said that $150,000 had been sent to aid victims from a joint GM labor-management fund, a donation AFGE President John Sturdivant noted was just part of the outpouring of assistance from unions around the country. AFGE and the IAFF have established relief funds, and another has been established in the name of the URW representative, Tom Hawthorne.

Graham said she had just arrived at another floor for computer training when "the blast blew me over on my back. I saw the roof of the building literally blown off. The next thing I remember is one of my co-workers calling my name and pulling debris off my back."

Looking at it on film, it doesn't seem real, Graham added. "Only when you stand in front of the building can you sense the devastation that can occur and the power of the blast." Of those who worked around Graham, only three survived, a man who sat behind her and two women who were able to grab hold of a ledge when the floor gave way.

Of those who planted the bomb, Graham said, "it is hard to conceive what could possess them to take out their anger on citizens. We've got to try to stop them from separating us from other workers because we happen to work for the federal government."

The council called for an end to the hate speech and violent actions against the government and federal employees.

"The heightened threat of anti-government terrorism has added to the heavy burden that government employees must carry every day at their jobs," the council said. "Even before the Oklahoma City incident, death threats were directed at these workers by individuals who were venting their anger over government programs."

> *"We had to reach out and touch them, to hug them, to know they were OK."*
>
> **—Jane Graham AFGE Local 3138, on Oklahoma City recovery efforts**

That hate speech has been exacerbated by irresponsible comments by some politicians, such as Oklahoma Sen. James Inhofe (R), who on the day after the bombing suggested on CNN's Crossfire that an accurate count of victims was difficult because many federal employees may have been "playing hooky that day, maybe had left early, may have gone out that were not authorized or something."

Sturdivant responded with a four-page letter assailing Inhofe's slander as insensitive and part of the effort by some politicians to have federal employees "demonized in the American public's consciousness."

At a press conference following the council meeting, Sturdivant noted that the union has been raising security concerns for years. "We've even had second thoughts about having day care centers in federal buildings. But the real issue is federal buildings need to be safe."

One security guard was assigned to three buildings, Graham told reporters. "Doors to the garage stayed open. The bomb could easily have been in the garage as it was on the street."

In response to workplace safety concerns in the mid-1980's, Congress directed the General Services Administration to hire 50 extra officers each year until it reached 1,000 officers by 1992. But GSA officials said officers quit faster than they could be recruited, in part because federal pay lagged behind private-sector salaries.

Efforts to comply with the law essentially ended when GSA faced increased budget cuts and began to downsize its operations.

Orange County poses test of privatization

By James B. Parks

The Orange County bankruptcy presents unions with a unique opportunity to develop a blueprint for fighting efforts at privatization of public services, the Executive Council was told.

After its greedy investment plans went bust, the county declared bankruptcy and sought to solve the crisis partially through privatization of public services and by abrogating collective bargaining agreements, said Strategic Approaches Committee Chairman Richard L. Trumka, president of the Mine Workers.

The committee rushed to help aid to the affected unions because other localities would be encouraged to privatize if Orange County were successful in accomplishing it, Trumka said.

"If they go for privatization, it would be a laboratory for others looking at privatization," said Gerald M. McEntee, president of AFSCME, one of the affected unions. "This is one of the wealthiest counties. They want privatization and reduction of pay, personnel and benefits," ignoring other viable options, he said.

Other unions that have asked for assistance in Orange County include the Fire Fighters, Service Employees, Operating Engineers, AFT and Laborers.

The AFL-CIO, through the committee, is mobilizing a coalition of Orange County community organizations and religious groups to turn out the vote June 27 for a referendum to raise the sales tax.

The tax is designed to preserve essential services and guarantee payments to schools, cities and other agencies with money in the ill-fated investment pool. It also would alleviate pressure for layoffs of public employees and cutbacks in service.

The federation also has assigned its religion labor coordinator and other staff to mobilize support from the religious community.

Trumka also updated the council on efforts to win a fair contract at Bridgestone/Firestone, Cook Family Foods, Pony Express and in the railroad industry.

Some 4,200 Rubber Workers struck Bridgestone/Firestone in July, when the company tried to impose a concessionary contract. After 10 months, it is the longest strike on record for the union, surpassing a 141-day strike in 1976.

Trumka reported that URW members in Decatur, Ill., voted to end the strike and return to work in what Roger Gates, president of URW Local 713, described as a strategic decision. The union expects the company to push for a decertification election and workers who are on strike for more than a year would be ineligible to vote, Gates said. The move would prevent the company from hiring replacement workers to vote in the election.

The National Labor Relations Board dismissed some bad faith bargaining charges filed by Bridgestone/Firestone and the URW. But the board's regional office upheld charges that the tire manufacturer violated federal labor law by discontinuing accident and sickness benefits for employees on disability during the strike and imposing new medical coverage requirements.

At Cook Family Foods in Grayson, Ky., about 100 members of the Firemen and Oilers, which merged with SEIU, ended an 18-month strike and returned to work. A federal court in Cincinnati had overturned an NLRB decision certifying the union as bargaining representative for the 100 workers. The SEIU is now re-establishing an in-plant committee to initiate a new organizing drive, Trumka said.

Meanwhile, the Maintenance of Way Employees has asked for the federation's help with a collective bargaining dispute with the nation's major railroads, Trumka said. The Strategic Approaches Committee is conducting background research on the dispute and will coordinate its assistance through the AFL-CIO Transportation Trades Department, he said.

The Teamsters campaign for a first contract at Pony Express is continuing, Trumka said, with the dispute leading to a fall in the stock of Pony's parent, Borg-Warner.

Labor strongly backs ILO, democracy-building

By James B. Parks

Congressional efforts to end all government contributions to the International Labor Organization and to reduce foreign assistance would hurt the national interest, the AFL-CIO declared.

The ILO, which was conceived largely by AFL President Samuel Gompers, "was and still is the only international body in which worker and employer delegates have an equal voice with government representatives in policy determination," the Executive Council said in a statement.

Despite its modest resources, the ILO "has made significant progress over the years in the struggle against totalitarianism and for basic human and trade union rights," the federation added.

Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) proposed ending U.S. participation in the ILO as part of a reduction in the overall federal budget for international affairs. The United States currently spends about $64 million annually to support the ILO.

The council disputed Helms' claim that the ILO structure was outdated in the global economy and gave too much of a role to labor unions.

"To ensure that this new global economy benefits, and does not exploit the workers whose activism and sacrifices made it possible, democratic governments must do all they can to ensure that economic development is not achieved at the price of human freedom," the council said.

"The ILO is uniquely qualified to serve in this endeavor because its fundamental test of a society's worth is whether it provides human beings — be they employers, workers or anyone else — the freedom to band together to pursue their common interests," the statement said.

The need for the United States to provide foreign assistance did not end with the Cold War, AFL-CIO Legislative Director Peggy Taylor wrote members of Congress. Citing the work done by the AFL-CIO's international institutes, Taylor urged the House International Relations Committee to authorize continuing support for international labor programs.

"The AFL-CIO strongly believes that the role played by trade unions in the development and maintenance of democracy around the world should be explicitly recognized and reinforced," she said.

In testimony before a House Appropriations subcommittee, AFL-CIO Legislative Representative Byron W. Charlton noted that the small expenditure of only 0.18 percent of the total federal budget for labor's international programs has paid high dividends. Programs developed by the federation's international institutes are funded by the National Endowment for Democracy, the U.S. Agency for International Development and the U.S. Information Agency.

The federation opposes efforts to fold these agencies into a "super-Department of State," Charlton said, because there are no safeguards to prevent diplomacy from becoming more bureaucratic and less flexible.

A merger also would leave foreign policy vulnerable to manipulation by foreign governments and would stifle independent voices that could warn of impending problems, Charlton said.

He cited the failure of policy makers to heed warnings about Mexico's economic problems during the debate over the North American Free Trade Agreement as an example of the kind of bad judgment that might be pursued unchecked if those organizations that have contacts with workers and non-elites are squeezed out of the international policy arena.

"The United States and the AFL-CIO share a fundamental interest: promoting democracy internationally to advance American interests. Building democracy creates stable, peaceful countries where economic growth and heightened standards of living can flourish," Charlton said.

To cut costs in international aid, the federation called for the United States to raise the requirements for democratization, market reform and human rights before giving assistance to foreign governments. In addition, aid to middle-income nations and some World Bank aid for richer developing countries should be eliminated, Charlton said.



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

Georges Exceus, director of AIFLD's Haiti office: "Nothing builds solidarity like a coup d'etat."

Exceus saluted for heroism in Haiti

The world now knows what trade unionists have known for four years: Georges Exceus is a true hero.

Exceus, who directs the Haiti office of the AFL-CIO's American Institute for Free Labor Development, spoke to the AFL-CIO Executive Council before traveling to Tulsa to receive the American Red Cross International Humanitarian Service Award.

The 42-year-old Haitian-American from Miami returned to his native land three weeks before the 1991 coup that overthrew President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

After sending his wife and young son back to Miami, Exceus ignored death threats and constant danger for almost four years. "I was tempted to leave many times. But there was so much to do, always one more life to save. I was on a mission," Exceus said.

"The feeling of danger was palpable and omnipresent," he added. "Day and night we heard the sound of guns firing."

"In as many ways as he could devise, he managed to get food, clothing and shelter for persecuted unionists and their families — and all too often, to arrange for medical treatment and even funerals for the victims of torture and murder," AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland said in introducing Exceus.

"Life has been very difficult," Exceus said. "During the coup, there was virtually no electricity. Gasoline was $30 a gallon. Food was in short supply. The phone system worked sporadically, rarely at night. Mail delivery was virtually non-existent, the economic and social conditions were bad and deteriorating, the political conditions were even worse."

Exceus noted that coup leaders decided early that repression of trade union leaders and political dissidents would be necessary to consolidate their hold on power. "Public meetings were essentially prohibited," he said. "Many of the union leaders with whom I was working were detained, beaten, and some were killed."

"Significantly, one important result of this period of great strain has been the growth of coalition of unions in the spirit of solidarity. I thought picket lines were tough, but nothing builds solidarity like a coup d'etat," he said.

Now that the junta's reign has ended, Exceus said, he can concentrate on helping to restructure the unions and embarking on election activities.

More than 200 labor leaders most recently have been involved in a national civic education and voter registration drive, Exceus reported. After weeks of work, the Haitian unions registered nationally 861,930 voters, one-third of the total voters registered in the country.

— James B. Parks

Union Privilege benefits show popularity, utility

Benefit programs set up by the AFL-CIO are tremendously popular with members of unions that subscribe to them, and also are earning strong marks for organizing new members, Union Privilege President Charles McDonald told the Executive Council.

The popularity of Union Privilege programs has been tracked by the volume of calls to the service center, McDonald said. The MasterCard and mortgage programs remain very strong, and the legal services program, offering 30 minutes of free legal advice, also has shown remarkable popularity.

The 9,616 calls received by the service center in April 1994 more than doubled in April 1995, to 19,410 calls, he said.

"There has been a tremendous upsurge in call volume, which now is at the rate of 250,000 calls a year," McDonald said.

Besides increased interest in the legal services program, members continue to avail themselves of low-down-payment arrangements for buying houses. The popular MasterCard features a lower interest rate along with strike/lockout protection and special arrangements for obtaining a card for those with poor or no credit.

A poll conducted in December 1994 of nearly 1,000 local union leaders showed that nearly 37 percent had used the benefits available through Union Privilege in their organizing drives — and credited that material with helping to sign up 20,026 members.

McDonald also unveiled several new initiatives, including a used-car program and a dental preferred provider network.

Also in the works is an automobile insurance program, which Union Privilege hopes to make available broadly to members, regardless of driving record. McDonald noted the importance of the benefit at a time when the average premium is $1,000 per year.

"We think we are on the road to something good," he said. "We think our members can use a program that relies on union members as the group, and that it will be better than anything on the market."

Union Privilege also is developing a home equity program with a significantly lower interest rate and a higher borrowing threshold than the typical 80 percent value of the home, and an insured certificates-of-deposit savings plan with a low minimum amount for an initial investment.

Other related programs available under the Union Privilege umbrella are UNION YES checks and return address labels, the National Ear Care Plan, discounts at Walt Disney World, Disneyland, Anheuser-Busch theme parks and Universal Studios, the "Parent's College Advisor" and Hertz rental car discounts.

— Colleen M. O'Neill

Labor demands public access to cyberspace

Commercial development may limit 'superhighway'

By Colleen M. O'Neill

With the growth of worldwide computer networks comes the responsibility for federal policies to ensure universal and affordable access to information, the AFL-CIO said.

The development of the "information superhighway" of networks, computers, databases and consumer electronics largely is occurring in the private sector, with the potential of ceding overwhelming control to those seeking to maximize profits, the Executive Council said in a statement.

"Converging communications industries are investing hundreds of billions of dollars in creating and providing information for those who have ready cash to pay for them," the federation said. "But there are no clear federal policies aimed at ensuring universal and affordable access to these increasingly vital services.

"Without such policies, the information superhighway will certainly exacerbate the gap between rich and poor by dividing the country into 'information haves' and 'information have-nots.' "

Communications Workers President Morton Bahr, who heads the federation's Committee on National Information Infrastructure, stressed the importance of labor's involvement in the issue.

"Because I am a member and Jack Golodner of the Department for Professional Employees is a member of the presidential commission looking into this issue, the panel soon will issue a report that will be more even-handed because of labor," he said.

"There must be priority wiring of schools and neighborhood centers such as libraries," which would provide the essential on-ramp for the general public. "We have to take an active role to see the technology is not driven by commercial uses."

Bahr noted that only 6 percent of the nation's classrooms have telephones, leaving the vast majority without places to plug in computer modems to access the information superhighway. Bahr placed the potential cost of wiring communities and schools as nearly $100 million.

"When the final report goes out, and through the period of implementation, there is a tremendous role for the labor movement," Bahr said. "Unless labor speaks out for the wiring of the average citizen, it's not going to happen."

President Al Shanker of AFT focused on a related problem — the privatization of school management, which features fancy computer labs and repainted and refurbished physical facilities, but also the extraction of profits by cutting personnel.

"They increase class size and fire senior instructors . . . and the test scores are going down," he told the council. "Still, parents love them, because the schools look nicer and they have computers."

Aside from access issues, the revolution in telecommunications begun in the early 1980s has resulted in the loss of a quarter-million high-wage, high-tech jobs, the council noted, with the Bureau of Labor Statistics foreseeing the loss of another 122,000 such jobs by the end of the decade.

Additionally, the technologies have taken a toll on the creators of material on the information highway. That material increasingly is used without authorization or compensation on a worldwide basis — at the expense of those who own it. The UAW's National Writers Union currently has filed suit against The New York Times over the illegal electronic distribution of freelancers' articles.

"Clearly, government policy for the information superhighway should be directed at assuring that the workers who produce, disseminate and deliver information do so under good wages, standards and working conditions," the AFL-CIO said.

"Federal law should guarantee that they have a genuine voice on the job through independent trade unions and adequate protection of their privacy rights. Our copyright laws should be vigorously enforced to protect against inappropriate use of U.S.-produced information in both domestic and overseas markets."



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

Newly elected NAACP Chairman Myrlie Evers-Williams, flanked by AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue and President Lane Kirkland, tells the Executive Council of the need to strengthen the alliance between the two organizations. At right is Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson of AFSCME.

Labor affirms affirmative action stand

By James B. Parks

The AFL-CIO urged President Clinton to make a strong endorsement of affirmative action as a "lawful, proved and effective means of furthering equal rights and equal opportunity."

The federation's "support of effective affirmative action — particularly in the employment context — is longstanding and unequivocal," AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland said in a letter to Clinton, who is conducting a review of affirmative action rules. Republicans have attacked the rules under the guise of preventing "reverse discrimination."

The letter on affirmative action was released during the AFL-CIO Executive Council meeting, which heard a number of reports on civil rights issues and hosted Myrlie Evers-Williams, the new chairman of the NAACP. She pledged to renew the long-time alliance of the AFL-CIO and the NAACP in their common fight for worker and civil rights.

Kirkland also noted that the council's February statement supporting the rights of immigrants had appeared as an advertisement in two Washington publications and was being translated into Spanish, Chinese and Vietnamese for placement in publications that serve various immigrant groups.

In its comprehensive 1992 report, "AFL-CIO and Civil Rights," the federation said affirmative action is essential to winning equal opportunity for women, blacks, Hispanics and members of other minority groups.

"One of the fundamental principles of the American society is opportunity for all — a nation where honest, hard-working people can get a job for which they are qualified and provide for their families, without fear of being denied their livelihood or stymied because of race, gender, national origin, disability or religious beliefs," the report concluded.

The AFL-CIO position on affirmative action, Kirkland said, has been developed by the "give and take in our internal democratic processes" and reflects the fact that the federation is made up of men and women of most every race, color, religion and national origin.

"The hard reality is that a long history of discrimination cannot be made to disappear in a few short years," Kirkland said.

"And, the equally hard reality is that for the foreseeable future, affirmative action programs are essential to correcting the past and improving the future."

"The government should not compromise the progress that has been made by weakening its critical affirmative action role," Kirkland told Clinton.

Evers-Williams, whose late husband, Medgar Evers, was slain for his role in leading the civil rights struggle, recalled her own labor roots as she praised the federation's historic partnership with civil rights groups.

"We are both looking at how our members are affected by the cutbacks in corporations as they downsize," she said. "I realize we both are looking at what is happening to the common worker, the people who make up our society. These are the issues the NAACP will be addressing."

On affirmative action, she said, "we should look at its importance to our society. We should review it and strengthen it, but we must be sure to keep it."

Lenore Miller, president of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union and chair of the federation's Civil Rights Committee, said the Republicans' attack on affirmative action and the Americans with Disabilities Act are part and parcel of their attack on worker rights.

Miller and Civil Rights Director Richard Womack reported on the recent AFL-CIO Civil Rights Institute, attended by 85 trade unionists from 35 affiliated unions. The issue of affirmative action, Womack noted, was a rallying cry for women as well as for minorities.

CWA reaches out and helps someone

A voluntary effort to provide phones for hospitalized veterans has won the Communications Workers the "Labor Union of the Year Award" from the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities.

The award, accepted by CWA President Morton Bahr May 18 at the committee's annual conference in Portland, Ore., recognizes a labor union for outstanding actions to empower its members with disabilities or advance the employment of workers with disabilities.

The CWA award is for members' volunteer efforts in a project called "P.T. Phone Home." The project, which began at CWA's Local 1120 in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., has now accumulated 41,325 volunteer hours and has benefited 22,564 veterans in 53 Veterans Affairs hospitals.

CWA members volunteered their time during afternoons, evenings and vacation to install bedside phones to give hospitalized veterans the opportunity to communicate with loved ones. Because there are a large number of patients who are paraplegic, the phone system was equipped with voice-activated dialing.

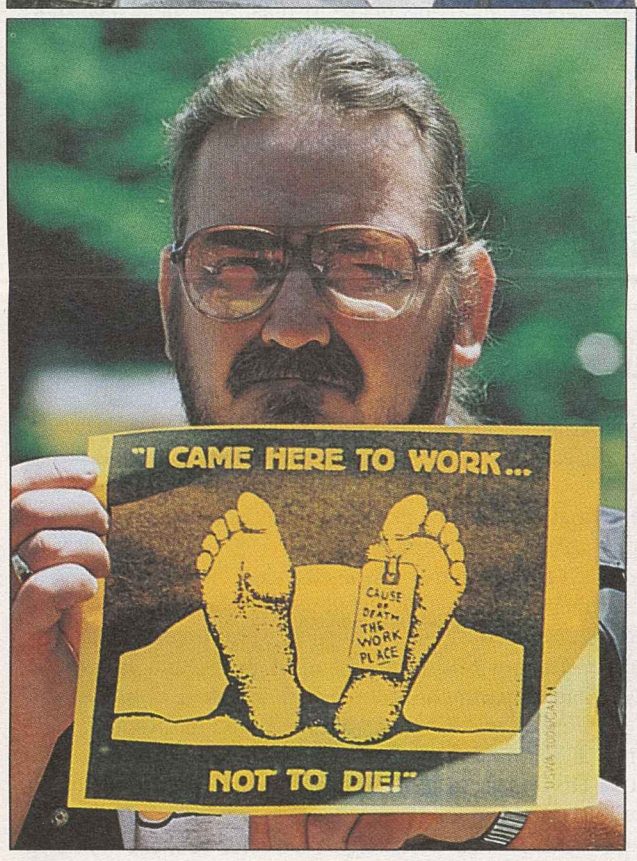
Before the new phones were installed, patients had to use coin-operated pay phones, which were brought to their rooms. But these phones were in short supply, and hospital staff cited cases where relationships between families and patients were strained because they could not communicate on a regular basis.

In the original project at the V.A. Medical Center in Castle Point, N.Y., volunteers from four CWA locals, NYNEX management and Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 6626 joined together to wire each room and install 400 phone jacks and a control system in the hospital's telecommunications room. The Electrical Workers also supported the project.

The name "P.T. Phone Home" is a takeoff on a line from the movie "E.T." "P.T." is the traditional acronym for "patient."

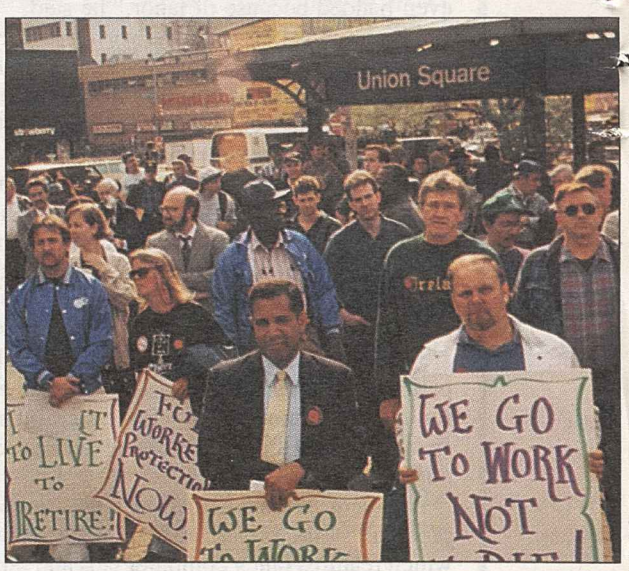


A choir sang as workers rallied in Greensboro, N.C., near the home district of Rep. Cass Ballenger (R), who is planning to introduce legislation that would gut the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.



Across the nation, a day to remember

From New York to Los Angeles, from Greensboro, N.C., to Oklahoma City, workers paused to remember brothers and sisters who died on the job and to renew the fight for safety and health protections. April 28 was the seventh annual Workers Memorial Day, made more poignant this year not only because of the deaths of 168 people in a terrorist bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building, but because of the assault on workplace protections now under way in Congress.



In New York, workers gathered at Union Square Park and attended a public forum held by Rep. Major R. Owens (D).

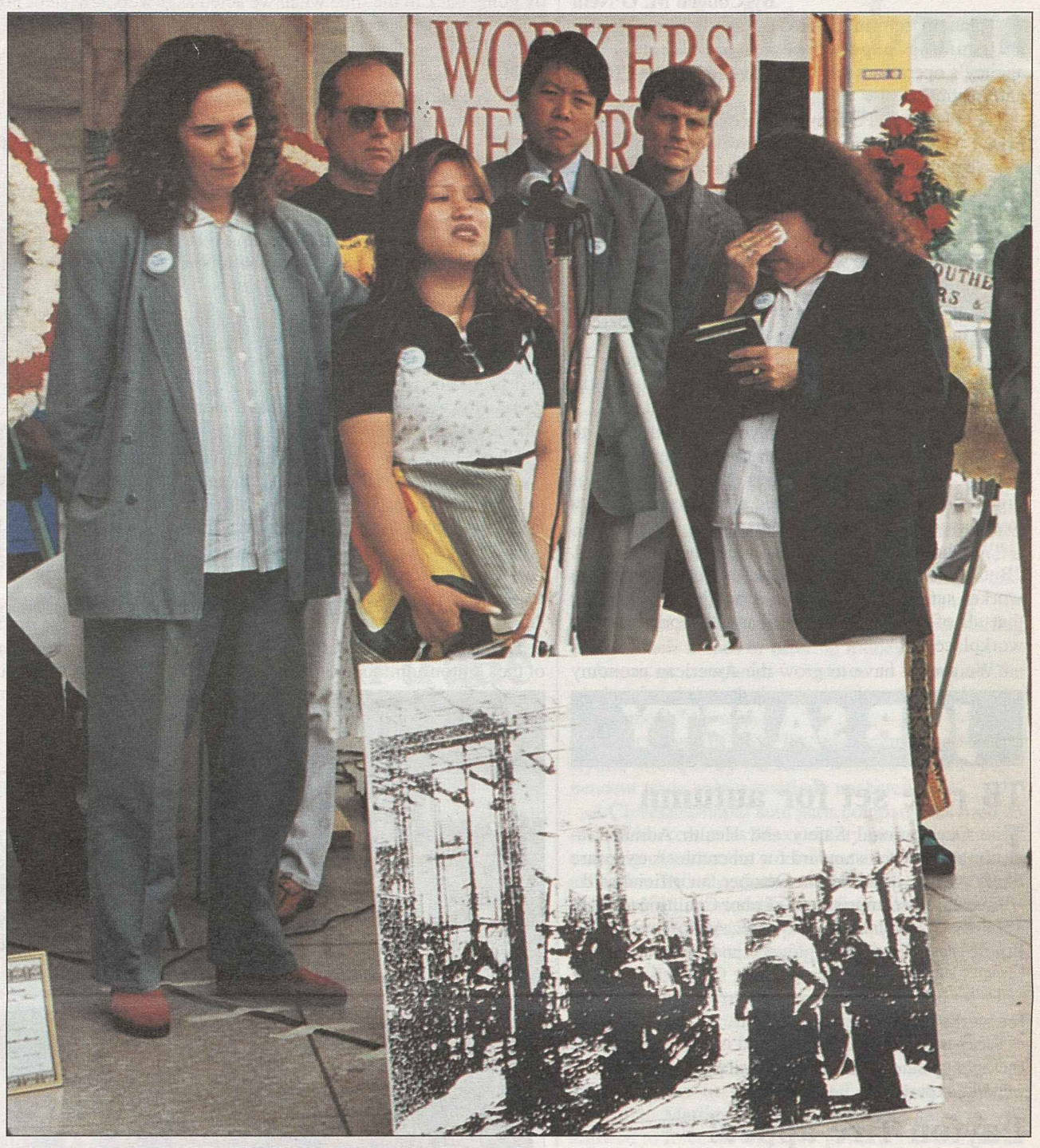


AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue bowed in prayer as the Rev. Don Brooks delivered the invocation in Oklahoma City.

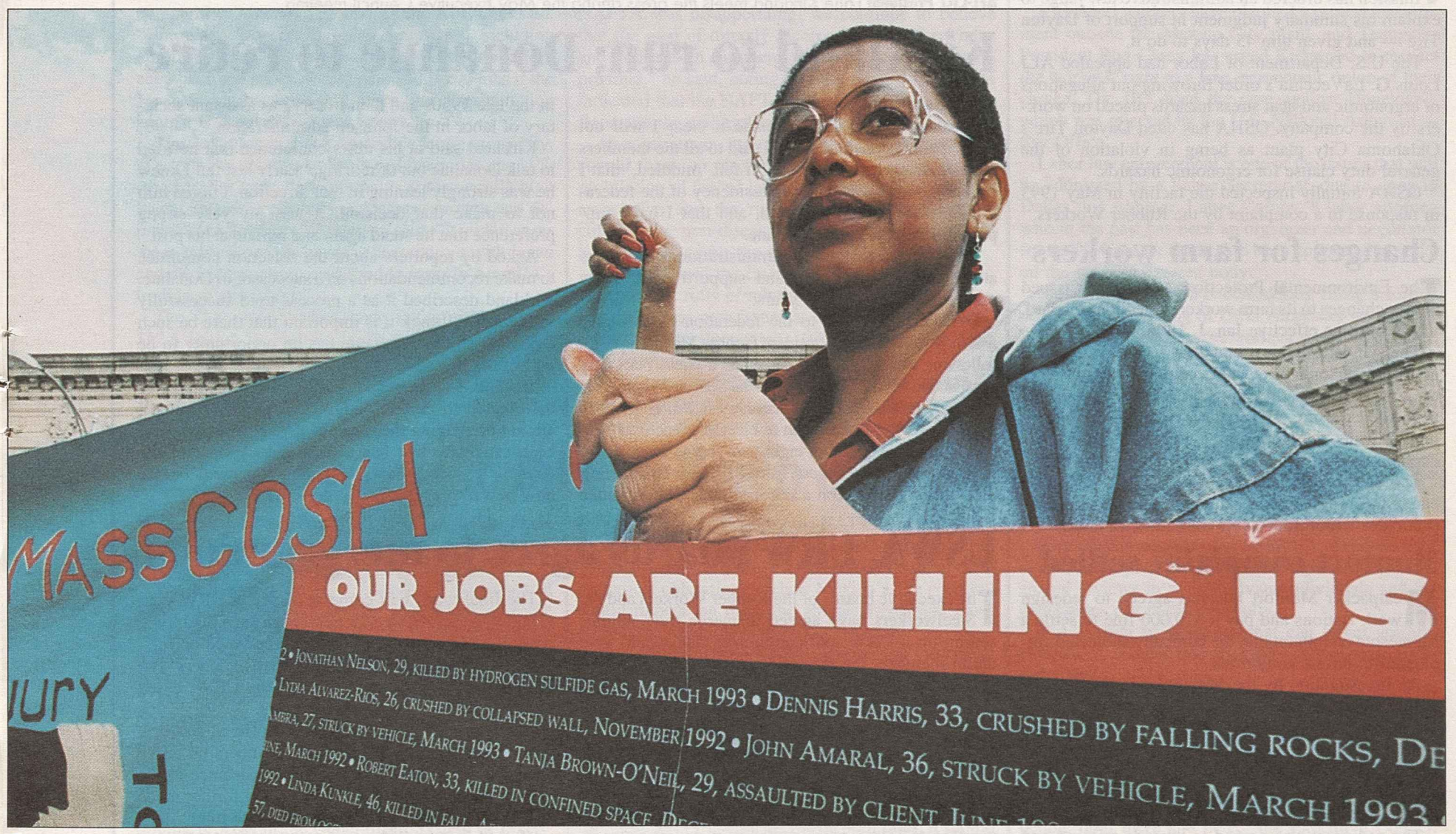


The memory of a chemical explosion that killed four workers at a Clothing and Textile Workers-represented plant in Lodi, N.J., the previous week was on the minds of workers rallying at the state capital of Trenton.





Indiana unionists dedicated a new monument, left, while the daughter and widow of Francisco Sanchez described the workplace tragedy that took his life in Los Angeles.



Hilda Rivera of the Western Massachusetts Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health holds a banner for a rally in Springfield.

Labor welcomes OSHA 'reinvention,' with caution

By Colleen M. O'Neill

A plan to reform OSHA by spotlighting results, trimming paperwork and transforming the agency's operations has been unveiled by the Clinton administration.

The National Performance Review's report, released May 16, advocates the development of workplace health and safety programs as a core component. To encourage the spread of such programs, employers will be given a choice — firms that set up such a program would enjoy a partnership relationship with OSHA, while those without a strong program would face traditional OSHA enforcement procedures.

The choice is modeled after a program that has been tested in Maine the past two years.

In so doing, OSHA would turn its attention to the most serious hazards and the most dangerous workplaces, seeking results at the expense of red tape.

"We don't believe that anyone should have to endanger their personal health or their very lives to make a living for their families and to live a life of dignity," President Clinton said at a news conference to release the reinvention report.

"We should reform. We absolutely should," he said. "But we should not roll back our commitment to worker safety. . . . We have a public responsibility that all of us share as Americans to work for safer workplaces.

"We do not have to grow the American economy by going back to the time when we acted as if worker safety doesn't matter. It does matter," Clinton said.

Worker rights is one key area of the report, with OSHA pledging to promote the need for increased employee participation in safety and health activities and improve anti-discrimination protection.

The report also details new approaches to such hazards as work-related musculoskeletal disorders — ergonomic injuries — by suggesting a combination of training and education, technical assistance and regulatory approaches. OSHA's involvement in the service sector also is covered in the report.

The federation endorsed the goal of the initiative — to improve worker safety and health by making OSHA a more effective agency — and President Clinton's pledge to protect the nation's job safety laws and programs from attacks by the Republican Congress. However, the AFL-CIO cautioned against the wholesale adoption of voluntary safety measures.

"There's nothing wrong with promoting voluntary compliance, but it is important to remember that under the Occupational Safety and Health Act, it's not OSHA's job to be the friend of employers," the AFL-CIO said in a statement. "It's to protect American workers from serious hazards through the promulgation of effective standards and strong enforcement of the law."

The Service Employees also welcomed the efforts of the Clinton administration, but cautioned that "such steps not be taken in haste that would hamper OSHA's mission of protecting America's working men and women."

The topic was very much on the minds of Executive Council members the previous week, as President Morton Bahr of the Communications Workers, chair of the federation's Occupational Safety and Health Committee, and Peg Seminario, the AFL-CIO's job safety director, briefed council members on a draft of proposed legislation by Rep. Cass Ballenger (R-N.C.) and other possible legislation.

The draft of Ballenger's bill, now expected any day, seeks to combine the Mine Safety and Health Administration and OSHA, while repealing the stronger standards of the Mine Safety and Health Act. It also would eliminate the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

In addition, the package would prohibit job safety citations and penalties for all but the most serious cases — in which a worker was killed or hospitalized — and would roll back maximum penalties that could be levied. The draft package also included a provision that OSHA would designate at least one-quarter of its budget for compliance assistance to employers, setting up a more consultative role for the agency.

Worker rights would be adversely affected under the draft Ballenger measure as well, since employees would not be allowed to complain to OSHA without first going to the employer.

JOB SAFETY

TB rule set for autumn

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration's proposed standard for tuberculosis exposure likely will be published in October, an official said.

Five unions comprising the Labor Coalition to Fight TB in the Workplace — AFSCME, AFT, Government Employees, Service Employees and the unaffiliated Local 1199 — have been pushing OSHA for several years for a formal regulation to help ease the potential for workplace transmission of TB.

Work on the proposed standard is near completion, the agency said, but the rule awaits a peer review by outside experts.

Dayton Tire appeal

The Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission has ordered an administrative law judge to explain his summary judgment in support of Dayton Tire — and given him 45 days to do it.

The U.S. Department of Labor had appealed ALJ Louis G. LaVecchia's order throwing out allegations of ergonomic and heat stress hazards placed on workers by the company. OSHA has cited Dayton Tire's Oklahoma City plant as being in violation of the general duty clause for ergonomic hazards.

OSHA initially inspected the facility in May 1993 in response to a complaint by the Rubber Workers.

Changes for farm workers

The Environmental Protection Agency has issued five changes to its farm worker protection standard, which become effective Jan. 1, 1996.

The standard requires employers to provide workers with personal protective equipment and safety training and to post warning signs on the hazards of pesticide exposure. The changes revise those training requirements, exempt crop advisers and provide exceptions for limited contact and irrigation activities.

The changes also include reduced restrictions on entry, meaning workers can enter areas treated with pesticides within four hours instead of 12 hours.

Monfort complaint settled

Meatpacker Monfort Inc. has agreed to redesign work stations and pay a $10,000 fine to settle a Minnesota complaint that the company subjected employees to unsafe conditions.

An investigation by the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry revealed that about 35 percent of Monfort's 900 manufacturing line employees at the Worthington pork plant had suffered some type of repetitive motion injury. The company will redesign at least 14 work stations, and other remedies may include increased automation or job rotations.

The company also agreed to provide training and appropriate medical treatment.



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland meets the press during the May Executive Council meeting.

Kirkland to run; Donahue to retire

Continued from page 1

a debate in which I have made it clear I will not participate," Donahue said. "I said to all the members of the council in February that I felt 'middled,' that I was not a candidate for the presidency of the federation, that no vacancy existed, and that I have supported and would support Lane.

"I have been part of his administration for 16 years and have been privy to, and supportive of, every policy followed in those years."

Donahue, 66, came to the federation as executive assistant to AFL-CIO President George Meany in 1973, following a distinguished career in a New York City local and in the national office of the Service Employees. He was elected AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer in 1979 and, like Kirkland, has been re-elected at each convention since then, a total of eight two-year terms.

Donahue took time out from SEIU for two assignments, first to serve on a European rescue committee in the late 1950s and then to serve as assistant secretary of labor in the Johnson administration.

Kirkland said at his news conference that he tried to talk Donahue out of retiring. "Early last fall I knew he was strongly leaning in that direction. I urged him not to make that decision. It was my very strong preference that he stand again and remain at his post."

Asked by reporters about the selection committee to make recommendations on a successor to Donahue, Kirkland described it as a process used successfully in the past. "I think it is important that there be such a process so that everyone has an opportunity to be part of the decision.

"I think it is the responsibility of the members of the council to make a judgment," Kirkland said. "I am not prejudging the result of it. Whether there will be a candidate that has a tacit endorsement of the council, or candidates, that committee will decide how best to proceed."

USWA, URW boards agree to merge unions

The executive boards of the Rubber Workers and the Steelworkers have agreed to merge their unions, setting up a URW ratification vote that would give union members the bargaining power of a 700,000-member organization.

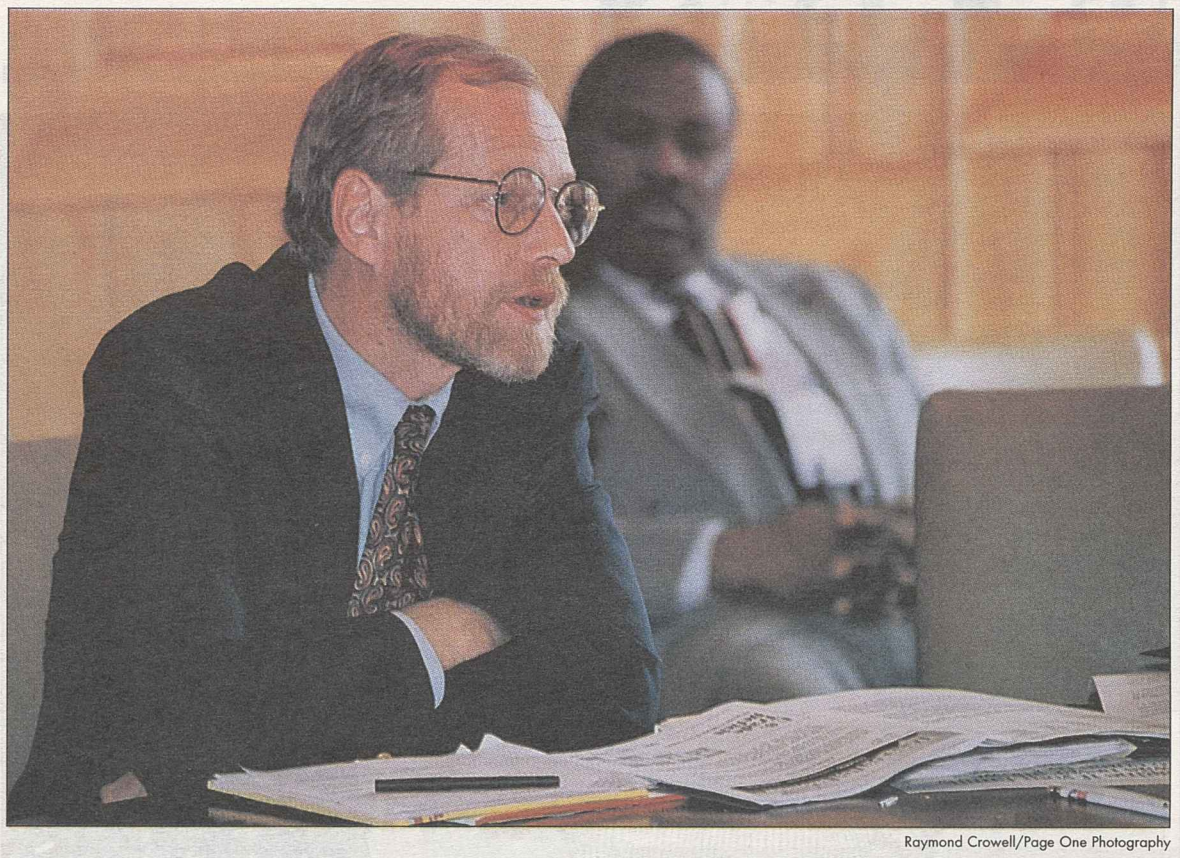
URW President Kenneth L. Coss and USWA President George Becker characterized the merger as a "proud achievement to combine our strength and resources in the political and legislative arenas, at the collective bargaining table, and to open the door wide for aggressive organizing among workers wanting to join a growing force in democratic unionism."

The final word will come at a special URW convention, tentatively set for Pittsburgh June 30-July 2, when the merger agreement would be voted on.

Both unions have U.S. and Canadian members. The USWA has 565,000 members and the URW, based in Akron, Ohio, has 98,000 members.

The Pittsburgh-based USWA has offered strategic resources to aid the 3,400 URW members on strike against Bridgestone/Firestone. The assistance is not contingent on the merger, which would further make available the union's $162-million strike fund.

"Together we will be stronger than steel," Becker said.



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

Mark Anderson, director of AFL-CIO task force on trade: "U.S-Chile talks must include worker rights."

Worker rights, jobs at stake in trade

Continued from Page 1

non-tariff barriers to block American access to their market.

- While nearly 80 percent of U.S. auto dealers sell imported cars alongside domestic-label vehicles, the number in Japan is 20 percent, with only 7 percent selling both American and Japanese cars.
- In Japan, 40 percent of all automotive repair and maintenance work is done in connection with regularly scheduled mandated inspections, mostly performed by government-designated garages tied to Japanese auto manufacturers and their original equipment parts suppliers.
- The closed "keiretsu" purchasing relationships between Japanese manufacturers and their key suppliers ignore market forces and effectively exclude the use of foreign parts.

"Union members in the rubber, glass, steel, aluminum, textile, machine tool, chemical, electrical, electronics and other industries would directly benefit from increased access to the Japanese auto market for competitive American products," the AFL-CIO said. "Unionized workers in other industries, including entertainment, telecommunications, construction, aerospace and paper, would gain additional jobs if the Japanese market were truly open and discrimination against U.S. producers was ended."

The stakes are high for America's future prosperity. "Despite the drastic weakening of the dollar, the U.S. merchandise trade deficit remains at historically high levels, retarding needed employment growth and depressing U.S. wages," Anderson said. "It underscores the importance of the ongoing negotiations with Japan and the need to bring equity and fairness to America's trading relationships."

The U.S. merchandise trade deficit slid another $12.6 billion in March. Trade with Mexico, which until this year was typically measured as a surplus, posted a $1.7 billion deficit. "We will be looking at about a $15 billion deficit by the end of the year," Anderson predicted.

"The impact on workers is simply awful," he said. "In Mexico, already half a million jobs have disappeared. Wages are now at 65 cents an hour in the export sector."

The continued deterioration in the bilateral trade relationship with Mexico has added fuel to the controversy surrounding U.S. efforts to expand NAFTA to Chile and throughout the Americas.

With labor and finance ministers from countries throughout the hemisphere meeting in Denver June 30 to continue plans for developing economic integration, leaders of trade union federations from 25 countries will meet the day before to help keep the worker rights issue on the agenda, Donahue reported.

Worker rights and standards and capital markets must be included as principal negotiating objectives under any fast-track authority, and then it should be extended only for Chile, Anderson said in testimony May 11 before the House Ways and Means subcommittee on trade.

"While the decision to negotiate a new trade arrangement with Chile through the expansion of NAFTA was disappointing, we continue to believe that the goal of directly incorporating worker rights and standards in commercial agreements is eminently possible," he said, noting that the administration has indicated that the NAFTA labor side agreement "is a floor, not the ceiling for future negotiations."

At a minimum, he said, negotiations with Chile should focus on reaching agreement concerning the prohibition of forced labor, guarantees of freedom of association and the right to organize and bargain collectively, non-discrimination in employment and a minimum age for the employment of children.

Anderson said the financial crisis in Mexico demonstrated the folly of relying solely on market forces, and urged that such issues as excessive foreign debt, exchange rate fluctuations and investment controls and oversight be addressed in the future.

"U.S. taxpayers should no longer be required to be the ultimate rescuer of speculators and elites involved in ill-conceived economic activity," he said.

Mexico silent on rights charge under NAFTA

By David Kameras

Mexican officials have failed to publicly address allegations that their government has blocked efforts by workers at Sony Corp. to form an independent union.

Labor officials of the three signatory countries of the North American Free Trade Agreement had been meeting in Ottawa, following recommendations by the United States that ministerial consultations be held on the dispute. The issue may be raised instead at an International Labor Organization meeting in Geneva in June.

Jesus Campos Lina, president of the National Association of Democratic Lawyers, one of the groups that brought the case under the labor side agreement of NAFTA, called the lack of action a delaying tactic.

"This happened before with the (similar) General Electric and Honeywell cases," he said. "Once workers file a complaint, government and company officials try to pressure them, sometimes even visiting them at their homes or offering money."

American companies "continue to disregard the workers' rights with the complicity of the Mexican government," he said.

Under cover of NAFTA, management efforts to stymie attempts by Mexican workers to form independent trade unions continue unabated.

A Cleveland-based auto parts company has fired 23 of 250 workers at its Mexico City plant as part of its campaign to scare its work force away from seeking affiliation with the Authentic Labor Front (FAT), an independent, democratic labor federation, union officials said. Workers were pressured to sign resignation papers, thereby surrendering reinstatement rights under Mexican law.

At the same time, Kirkwood Industries hired 80 workers from COCEM, a union dominated by the government.

"Workers should not have to tolerate these kinds of gangster acts in this day and age," said FAT's Benedicto Martinez. "A U.S. company shouldn't be allowed to force an 'official,' government-dominated union down the throats of Mexican workers just because they want respect on the job."

Kirkwood workers have planned a protest encampment outside the Mexico City plant, and Teamsters President Ron Carey has urged Kirkwood to respect the workers' right to a free, democratic union of their choice. The IBT filed the case against Honeywell, which was rejected by the U.S. National Administrative Office.

Labor law enforcement is one of the issues that will be addressed by a Labor Secretariat, due to open in Dallas this summer. Lance Compa, a labor attorney who in the past has been an organizer and negotiator for the Newspaper Guild, has been appointed to serve on the NAFTA-created body.

Meanwhile, Mexico is considering filing a formal protest over the firing of Latin American workers by Sprint Corp. just before the workers at its La Conexion Familiar facility in San Francisco were to vote in a union representation election. Mexico denies it is investigating the Sprint case in retaliation for U.S. involvement with the Sony issue.

AFL-CIO says Caribbean Basin bill is attack on jobs, justice

The AFL-CIO assailed the Caribbean Basin Trade Security Act, calling the current legislative proposal an attack on jobs and workplace justice.

The bill would result in the loss of thousands of jobs in the U.S. apparel industry, as well as undermine the protections of Caribbean Basin workers' rights that are now contained in several American trade laws, the Executive Council said in a statement.

The legislation, which is intended to provide tariff and market access equivalent to the North American Free Trade Agreement for products from the Caribbean region, would instead harm workers both there and in the United States.

As currently written, the bill would end the petitioning process in the Generalized System of Preferences, which has helped Caribbean Basin workers to organize independent trade unions.

Further, while extending the NAFTA framework to some 27 countries, regardless of whether they comply with international worker rights standards or agree to reciprocal obligations such as Mexico's, the proposal would impose on them the anemic rights and environmental standards codified in NAFTA.

The legislation also would cut duties on Caribbean Basin Initiative imports, thereby reducing tax revenues by more than $1 billion over four years, and would manipulate tariff protection levels and allow non-CBI producers back-door access to U.S. markets.

"The AFL-CIO strongly favors reform of our trade relationships with the Caribbean Basin countries," the federation said, "but any legislation should promote the interests of working people on both sides. It should set clear, enforceable workers' rights and labor standards for any nation seeking NAFTA parity."

To that end, the council recommended:

- An initial review of a country's observance of internationally recognized worker rights, followed by annual reviews in which private individuals and organizations can participate fully.
- A system of sanctions that can target specific companies or areas that are guilty of violating workers' rights.
- Guarantees that existing protections in the CBI and elsewhere in U.S. law for workers in the region will be retained.
- An end to tariff preference levels in the CBI.

The legislation "might prove to be a bonanza for the wealthy, but it would be a disaster for working people both there and here," the Executive Council said. "Congress should remedy its defects or it should be defeated."

UNION NEWS

BARGAINING

Contract may cover 64,000

Eleven locals of the Food and Commercial Workers ratified a new three-year master agreement covering 32,000 employees of three Northern California supermarket chains.

The agreement with Safeway, Lucky Stores and Save Mart continues wages and benefits at current levels. Because health care costs are expected to increase over the term of the contract, some $40 million will be diverted from an overfunded health and welfare fund to pay the costs.

The workers had walked out and been locked out for nine days in April over the contract talks. Other major area food retailers have signed onto the pact, resulting in coverage of about 44,000 workers. The union said it expects other retailers will accept the same terms, leading to coverage of another 20,000 employees.

IBEW, Rockwell agree

Some 1,500 Electrical Workers at Rockwell International's Collins Division plant in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, ratified a new three-year contract that increases wages and provides for employee training.

The contract, effective May 1, increases wages by 50 cents an hour in the first year along with a $600 lump-sum bonus on May 19. Employees will receive an $1,800 lump-sum payment in the second year and a 3 percent wage increase in the last year.

Two letters of understanding also were negotiated between the company and IBEW Local 1362. One establishes an employee development program to enhance employees' skills to meet the company's future needs. The other requires the company to explore with the union viable ways of subcontracting when work cannot be done in-house for competitive reasons.

N.Y. drivers to roll

New York City school bus drivers reached an agreement with Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani that preserved job securities that the city threatened to abolish.

The drivers, represented by Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1181, had threatened to walk off the job if the city removed provisions that guarantee their jobs regardless of which companies hold contracts. In 1979, drivers struck over the same issue for three months.

The agreement delays pension, health and welfare payments.

News unions gain pacts

After two years of talks, five unions representing 1,600 employees ratified separate five-year deals with the San Jose Mercury News.

The unions negotiated jointly as the Bay Area Conference of Newspaper Unions. They initially bargained separately over issues unique to their own units and, beginning in January, came together to discuss economics, said Bill Davis, executive officer for The Newspaper Guild Local 98.

The agreement includes eight wage adjustments over term. Each union separately determined how the negotiated increase should be divided between wages and the health and welfare funds and pension funds for their members.

Besides TNG, the other unions represented in the talks included the Teamsters, Communications Workers Typographical division, Pressmen and Mailers.

URW, Titan agree

The Rubber Workers approved a new three-year contract with Titan Tire Corp., narrowly averting a strike by 530 workers at the company's Des Moines plant.

URW Local 164 walked out for more than a month last summer as part of the strike against Pirelli Armstrong. Titan bought the plant from Pirelli July 16, but production did not resume until Aug. 26.

The new agreement formalizes a package that includes some givebacks, but the new agreement also adds profit-sharing and bonus plans. The bonus plan amounts to $1 an hour for every hour a person works during a fiscal quarter, said Local 164 President Earl Seymour.



Karen Keiser/Washington State AFL-CIO

Farm Workers President Arturo Rodriquez and Washington State AFL-CIO President Rick Bender celebrate the signing of the UFW's election agreement with Stimson Lane Ltd., which produces Chateau St. Michelle and Columbia Crest wines. The agreement marked the union's first in Washington state, which has no agricultural labor relations law even though it has the third-highest number of farm workers in the nation. It provides for company neutrality in organizing and sets up an independent commission to oversee election and bargaining arrangements. The UFW called off its boycott of the wines.

Machinists mull stake in USAir

Board seats, equity stake dominate emerging pacts

By David Kameras

Talks continued between two unions and USAir on a rescue package for the beleaguered carrier, as the Machinists outlined details of their recently completed tentative pact.

Under the agreement, which awaits ratification by the union's membership, USAir's 8,000 mechanics would exchange 12.9 percent of their wages and accept work-rule changes for a seat on the airline's board, an employee stock option plan, 20 percent of all common stock and $400 million in preferred stock divided among all employees, profit sharing and a variety of job-protection provisions.

The IAM held the line against efforts to reduce vacations, holidays, health benefits, pensions and transfers of work to foreign repair stations, and blocked a freeze on pay progressions.

Some 6,500 fleet service employees who voted last year for IAM representation would get their first-ever contract, with the same ESOP and governance provisions in exchange for a 10 percent cut in pay.

The tentative contract "provides substantial job security for IAM-represented mechanic and fleet service personnel," said IAM Vice President William Scheri. "At the same time, the provisions of the agreement will help return USAir to a position of economic viability as one of the leading carriers in the airline industry."

In a letter to Machinists working for USAir, Scheri and District Lodge 141 President and General Chairman Ken Thiede characterized the agreements as "necessary for the survival and success of the company and for the future economic security of you and your family. We believe you will agree that your job is worth the investment."

The Air Line Pilots reached a tentative agreement with USAir in March, with ratification awaiting conclusion of all labor talks. Negotiations still are under way with the Flight Attendants and the Transport Workers.

The IAM also secured bonuses for clerical, office and passenger service employees of Alaska Airlines.

Workers will receive between $750 and $1,500 each year in the first three years of their new four-year pact. The final year includes a 3 percent general wage increase. In addition, the cap on comp time has been raised from 40 to 120 hours per calendar year, which can be paid at time-and-a-half during bidding for vacations, and training will be counted as overtime.

The contract, which also adds dental and vision care benefits, has an "early opener" provision, whereby the National Mediation Board will come in immediately if the two sides cannot reach an agreement within a six-month period.

The pact "is the best we could do under the circumstances," said Tom Trotter, a spokesman for IAM District 143. "It's a tough time for airlines."

AFA protests Hong Kong base

At United Airlines, meanwhile, AFA members held a rally May 17 at San Francisco International Airport to protest a decision by the carrier to open a base in Hong Kong July 1.

The rally also marked the 65th anniversary of the flight attendant profession, which began on a flight from San Francisco to Chicago on Boeing Air Transport, a predecessor of United Airlines.

"It is ironic that on a day when we should be celebrating how far the flight attendant profession has come, we have to join together to fight to keep our jobs in the United States," said Kevin Lum, president of AFA's Master Executive Council at United. "It has been the flight attendant legacy to fight for everything we have — the right to be of any race or creed, married or pregnant, male or female. And we will stand together again to protect our jobs."

Overseas bases was the key issue leading to AFA's refusal to participate in an ESOP that last year gave other United employees a majority stake in the airline.

"We will not disappear on this issue," said Lum. "We will not stand by passively and watch our best jobs move away from the United States."

NATCA fights privatization

In another industry development, the National Air Traffic Controllers Association, an affiliate of the Marine Engineers, has set up informational picket lines at major airports nationwide to garner support for establishing a government corporation to modernize the air traffic control system.

Union members are worried that turning the system over to the airlines would set up a conflict of interest, where the rush to get planes off and on the ground would put safety back in the economy section.

"Our main concern with privatization is that money and profit might become the driving issue," said Tony Lamberth, a controller at Washington's National Airport. "We want safety to be the driving issue."

COURTS

Monfort in criminal plea

Monfort, Inc., one of the nation's largest meatpackers, pleaded guilty May 5 to criminally violating an Occupational Safety and Health Act standard and was fined $100,000 by a federal court.

The charge resulted from the Oct. 1, 1990, death of Monfort maintenance employee Richard Skala at the company's plant in Grand Island, Neb. Skala was killed when a co-worker's knee hit a pedal on a de-fleshing machine, causing the machine to crush Skala's head. The machine, which is used to remove hair and flesh from cattle hides, should have had five lockout devices, but only had one and no guards on its rollers.

This is the first criminal case under OSHA in Nebraska, said Debbie Berkowitz, Food and Commercial Workers safety director. The prosecution of the case sends a clear message to employers in the meatpacking industry about the importance of protecting the health and safety of their workers, she said.

Bargaining order upheld

A Los Angeles manufacturer violated federal labor laws when it refused to bargain with unionized employees it transferred to a non-union plant 19 miles away, a federal appeals court ruled.

The court upheld a National Labor Relations Board decision that Leach Corp., which manufactures electronic switches for the aerospace industry, had a longstanding relationship with the Machinists at its Los Angeles plant.

With more than a year left on its collective bargaining contract, the company closed the plant in 1990 and moved production to a non-union plant in Buena Vista. The company informed the union it would not extend the contract to employees who transferred to Buena Vista.

Some 280 of the 340 IAM members transferred to the new plant. Eventually the entire Buena Vista production line was composed of former L.A. employees.

The NLRB and the court rejected company arguments that the IAM complaint was filed too late.

CitiSteel ruling upset

The Steelworkers no longer represent workers at a Delaware plant that was closed and reopened two years later by a new owner, a federal appeals court ruled.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit overturned a National Labor Relations Board ruling that there was continuity between the old and new ownership and that the workers had reasonable expectation of being rehired at the mill.

CitiSteel was formed by Hong Kong investor L.H. Chang to operate the plant that was purchased from Phoenix Steel Corp. for $13 million, and reopened after a $25 million refurbishing.

Phoenix shut down its Claymont, Del., plant in January 1987, displacing 220 employees. Chang bought the plant in December 1987 and began operations in February 1989. By April, it employed 124 workers, mostly former Phoenix employees.

The court said the NLRB, by treating CitiSteel as a successor to Phoenix, ignored significant changes that Chang made to the plant, job classifications and working conditions.

Bankruptcy shield finite

Bankruptcy code protections for collective bargaining agreements are limited to bankruptcies dealing with reorganization, not those that liquidate a company's assets, a federal appeals court ruled.

The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld a lower court decision that prevents trust funds set up by the Carpenters and Operating Engineers in California from securing priority status for some $75,000 in delinquent employee benefit contributions from Rufener Construction Inc. Both labor agreements required contributions to the trust funds based on the hours of work performed.

Rufener filed for bankruptcy in San Francisco under Chapter 7, but the trust funds sought payment for work that predated the filing. Although the bankruptcy code bars an employer from unilaterally terminating or modifying a labor agreement, a federal judge ruled the ban did not apply to Chapter 7 filings because that section of the law assumes continued operation of a business, not a total liquidation.



NALC photo

Letter Carrier Marie Diaz of NALC Branch 1071 in Miami and thousands of letter carriers across the country delivered over 40 million pounds of non-perishable food from customers along their postal routes to community food banks on May 13, the third NALC National Food Drive.

Leslie Fay reneges, will end U.S. era

Reneging on its promise to preserve workers' jobs, Leslie Fay is closing its last remaining domestic clothing plant, throwing some 600 Ladies' Garment Workers out of work.

The company's decision to shut down its Wilkes-Barre, Pa., plant Aug. 1 betrayed the ILGWU, which last July lauded the company for "pointing the way to joint labor-management efforts to preserve American manufacturing jobs even as American companies participate in the global economy."

Leslie Fay based its decision to close on a binding recommendation by independent facilitator and former Labor Secretary W. J. Usery and his associate Herb Fishgold.

"The decision by Bill Usery and Herb Fishgold outrageously bases its recommendation that Leslie Fay may close its Wilkes-Barre plant exclusively on the poor performance of the company, which is widely known to be the result of its past and present mismanagement," said ILGWU President Jay Mazur.

Citing an accountant's study, Usery said the company should be relieved of its contractual obligations to guarantee any jobs at the plant because they could not profitably manufacture dresses at the plant.

Leslie Fay has been the target of criticism in the apparel industry for its poor management, lack of vision and marketing strategy for several years. The company has been in bankruptcy since 1993 and has threatened to close its Wilkes-Barre plant since 1994.

Usery had mediated the negotiations last year that resulted in the end to a six-week strike by the workers and a national AFL-CIO boycott, both sparked by the shutdown threat, and initiated a contract that the ILGWU called a "trailblazer agreement."

The agreement called for a guarantee of workers' jobs for at least a year and provided for a joint labor-management panel to review the Wilkes-Barre facility's operation and determine how it "can continue to profitably produce dresses domestically and compete successfully in the moderate dress marketplace."

"Instead of living up to this agreement fairly and responsibly over the past 10 months, the company's management has undermined and resisted efforts by our union and their own local plant managers in Wilkes-Barre to preserve the jobs," said Mazur.

The union complained that Usery was preoccupied with mediating the baseball strike and failed to ensure that the company complied with key provisions of the agreement. It has asked that the recommendation be reconsidered, while pursuing a number of avenues to keep the jobs in Wilkes-Barre.

Shopping campaign airs worker abuses

By Muriel H. Cooper

Trade unionists and their consumer and congressional allies used the Mother's Day holiday to remind consumers about some of the foul practices by popular name-brand manufacturers that have resulted in U.S. job losses and the abuse of thousands of workers around the world.

The "Come Shop With Me" campaign, which began during the Christmas holiday season, exposes companies that have shut down plants in the United States, leaving many families jobless, taking work to offshore factories where they mistreat foreign workers — all while earning billions in profits.

"A link exists between working conditions in India, Brazil, China and Colombia — just to name a few nations with no decent standards for workers — and the economic whirlpool sucking down the standard of living of so many of our families in the United States," Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-Ohio) told a news conference.

Kaptur was joined by several labor representatives, including members of the Ladies' Garment Workers and the Clothing and Textile Workers and officials from the National Consumers League, who reported on the thousands of workers and consumers affected by plant closings, downsizings and layoffs.

"I have personally witnessed the devastation of communities and individual women's lives caused by plant closings," said Jean Hervey, vice president of the Coalition of Labor Union Women and associate regional manager for ACTWU's southwest region. "I have seen mothers competing with their own daughters for the few jobs that are left after the shoe jobs have gone offshore."

Pointing to a mannequin wearing items formerly produced by American workers, Kaptur said that U.S. consumers are not benefiting from trade in these goods. "Prices are as high as ever," she said. "A Coach handbag costs between $178 to $204. Naturalizer dress shoes cost $49.99. A dozen roses will run you close to $75 at a florist.

"Who profits off the labor of women and children? It is the U.S. corporations and retail stores who buy from these subcontractors who profit — relentlessly forcing down the price of purchase at the point of manufacture with monopolistic buying power, only then to sell the same goods at high prices in the United States," she said.

Americans will not put up with abusive and exploitive labor, said Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa), who in April reintroduced his Child Labor Deterrence Act to educate the public about child labor. "The pressure continues to mount against those who exploit children."

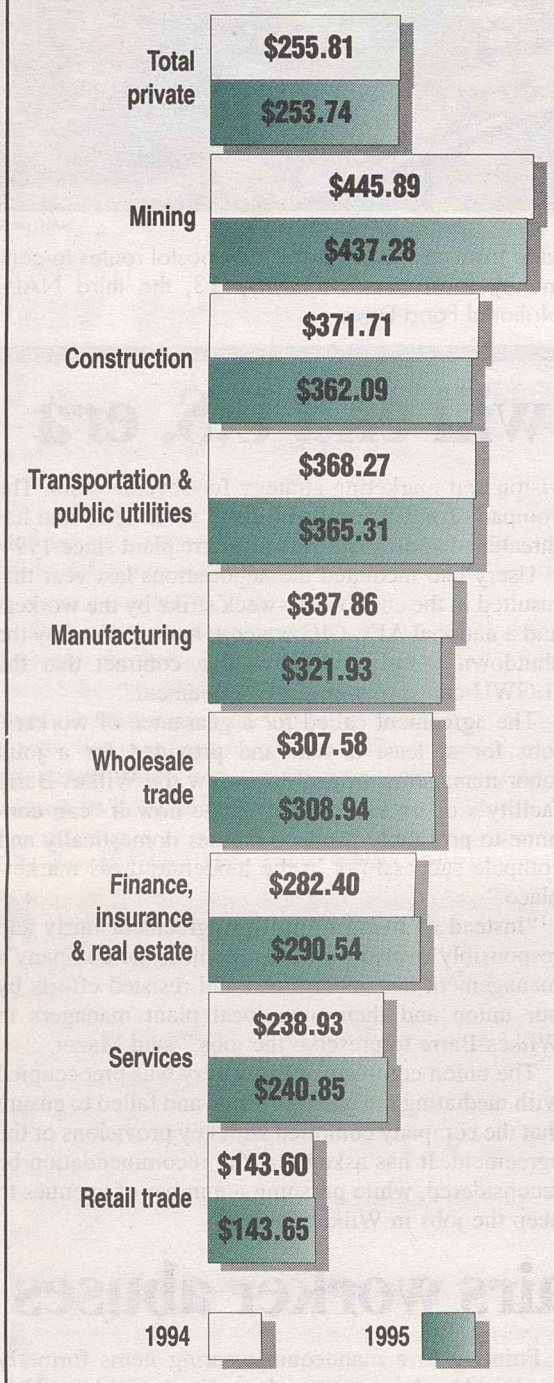
Harkin praised the "Come Shop With Me" campaign and another labor-backed program that seeks to educate consumers about child labor by promoting carpets designated as not being manufactured by children. Many South Asian carpet manufacturers have signed on to that RUGMARK program, which is sponsored by the Child Labor Coalition.

Darlene Adkins, coordinator for the coalition, told a recent Labor Department hearing that "bonded labor is one of the most insidious forms of child labor exploitation, and industries and countries where it is prevalent warrant immediate consumer attention and action."

DATA

Real average weekly earnings

April 1994 vs. April 1995 (1982 dollars)



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Workers' pay, adjusted for inflation, rose 0.6 percent in April, after two consecutive months of decline. Since April of last year, real average weekly earnings have declined 0.8 percent, or $2.07 in constant 1982 dollars. Manufacturing workers have been especially hard-hit, with their inflation-adjusted earnings falling 4.7 percent, or $15.93 in 1982 dollars.

Real Earnings	
April	+0.6 percent
From April '94	-0.8 percent
Consumer Prices (CPI-W)	
April	+0.4 percent
April '94 - April '95	+3.2 percent
Producer Prices	
April	+0.5 percent
Unemployment Rate	
April	5.8 percent
From March	+0.3 percent
Merchandise Trade Deficit	
March	$12.6 billion
February	$13.4 billion

AFL-CIO NEWSGRAFIC

Jobless rate reflects slowdown

Insurance eludes many who barely squeeze by

By David Kameras

In a dramatic further sign that rising interest rates are putting the brakes on the economy, the unemployment rate took a big 0.3 percent jump in April to 5.8 percent.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics attributed the drop in employment in part to mild weather and the period in which it gathered data. "Even allowing for the possible impact of imperfect seasonal adjustment, however, the trend in payroll employment growth clearly is down from last year's rapid pace," BLS Commissioner Katharine Abraham told the congressional Joint Economic Committee.

Allowing for the special circumstances of seasonal adjustment, "the direction is clear," said AFL-CIO economist Markley Roberts. "There is an economic slowdown under way, and it is reasonable and logical to see in this the continuing bite of Federal Reserve slow-growth, anti-inflation policies."

Another major contributing factor was the collapse of the Mexican economy, which sharply reduced U.S. exports and the jobs they support.

"Mexico is our second-largest trading partner," said economist Audrey Freedman. "The drop in the Mexican economy is the main thing slowing the U.S. economy. This is probably the beginning of a period of very little growth in manufacturing, mostly due to Mexico."

Indeed, jobs in manufacturing and construction did drop, with slight gains posted in service-related jobs. In all, the economy suffered a net loss of 9,000 jobs.

"Overtime in manufacturing, a sensitive indicator, has dropped slightly but is still high at 4.3 hours per week," Roberts said. Those hours could have been directed instead toward creating new jobs.

The official number of jobless workers jumped from 7.2 million to 7.7 million. However, when combined with 4.5 million involuntarily working part time and 1.4 million other available workers, including discouraged workers, a total of 13.5 million workers were affected by unemployment and under-employment.

Even the official jobless figure understates the pain felt by those it represents, a recent report by the Advisory Council on Unemployment Compensation shows.

The ratio of insured unemployed workers (those filing a claim and having eligibility) to all of those out of work and actively seeking work in 1993 was under 33 percent in 32 of 52 jurisdictions. Twelve states had ratios of less than 25 percent, with South Dakota coming in at 15.3 percent.

"You don't need a Ph.D. to understand that our (unemployment insurance) system is neither serving the needs of unemployed workers nor employers as well as it should," said Steelworkers Vice President Leon Lynch.

The apparent economic slowdown will only make the pain level more acute.

"It's clear the last four months have seen a definite downshifting of the economy and the labor market," said David Wyss, senior economist with DRI/McGraw Hill. "The 'R word' (recession) is beginning to rear its ugly head."

In the 49 months since the March 1991 low point of the last recession, "7.5 million payroll jobs have been added — still far below the 12.9 million added after the March 1975 recession low and far below the 11.7 million added after the November 1982 recession low," Roberts said.

From March to April, unemployment rose for adult men (4.7 percent to 4.9 percent), adult women (4.9 percent to 5.2 percent), teenagers (16.1 percent to 17.5 percent), white adults (4.7 percent to 5.0 percent), white teenagers (13.6 percent to 14.6 percent), African-American adults (9.8 percent to 10.7 percent) and African-American teenagers (31.2 percent to 35.6 percent). Hispanic employment improved, from 9.1 percent to 8.8 percent.

Of 11 large states, unemployment rose in California (7.6 percent to 7.9 percent), Florida (4.4 percent to 5.6 percent), Illinois (4.4 percent to 5.7 percent), Massachusetts (4.6 percent to 5.9 percent), New Jersey (5.8 percent to 6.3 percent), New York (6.6 percent to 6.8 percent), North Carolina (3.9 percent to 4.7 percent), Ohio (3.8 percent to 4.5 percent) and Texas (5.7 percent to 5.9 percent). Unemployment fell in Michigan (6.0 percent to 5.8 percent) and Pennsylvania (6.0 percent to 5.8 percent).

About one-sixth of the officially unemployed, or 1.4 million, were out of work 27 weeks or more.

Blacks' pay lags despite education gains

By James B. Parks

Despite making significant advances in educational achievement, the wages of African-American workers have fallen severely in relation to whites in the last 20 years, a new study shows.

Although the wages of both blacks and whites have dropped in the last two decades, the impact on African-Americans has been greater, according to the study, "Where's the Payoff? The Gap Between Black Academic Progress and Economic Gains" by Jared Bernstein of the Economic Policy Institute.

The study found that African-Americans were more likely to be affected adversely by harmful trends in the labor markets. Those trends include declining union membership, lower real value of the minimum wage, shifts to lower-paying industries, inequality in wages that favor workers with more experience and education, and erosion of worker bargaining power.

In addition, Bernstein said, "blacks have the added burden of labor market discrimination, and while this factor is hard to quantify, the available evidence suggests that it has not diminished and may have increased."

After closing the hourly wage gap over the 1970s, blacks lost ground to whites in the 1980s. The wage gap grew fastest for those black males with more education.

The average white male made $14.66 an hour in 1973 and $13.95 an hour 20 years later. Black males made $10.99 in 1973, or 74.9 percent of whites. This slid to $10.43, or 74.8 percent, in 1993.

"Surprisingly, the wage gap grew the most for young black men with 16 or more completed years of schooling," the report found. This would refute the argument that most of the decline in black earnings is due to a higher demand for educated, highly skilled workers.

For black males with 16 years or more of schooling, the average wage in 1979 was $18.45 an hour, or 90.2 percent of whites. This dropped to $17.31 in 1993, or 78.6 percent of whites.

White males with less than a high school education were making an average of $12.25 an hour in 1973. This had dropped to $9.45 in 1993. During the same period, their black counterparts made $9.83 in 1973, or 80.3 percent of whites, and $8.15 in 1993, or 86.2 percent of whites.

Black women closed the wage gap more than black men, the report found. The gap widened, however, for college-educated women, although not as much as it did for men.

In terms of educational attainment, blacks and whites currently have similar levels of education, Bernstein found. Over the last 50 years, the gap in median educational attainment level between white men and black men dropped from 3.3 years to 0.3 years, and from 2.7 years to 0.2 years for black women.

Black scores on standardized national tests rose relative to whites as well, Bernstein found. But despite these achievements, blacks fell further behind in earnings.

An alarming trend, Bernstein said, is the degree to which young black men with high school educations or less are leaving the labor force. Among high school dropouts, the employment rate dropped from 83 percent in 1973 to 52.4 percent in 1993.

"It is clear that human capital policy, such as increasing workers' skills, is necessary but not sufficient to achieve parity," Bernstein said. "There is a role for government to play in shoring up institutions that have been eroding, including worker training programs, placement of displaced workers, a livable minimum wage and strengthened labor and anti-discrimination laws."

UNION NEWS

Plumrose boycott ends

Plumrose USA Inc., makers of meat and meat products, has been taken off the AFL-CIO's national boycott list at the request of the Food and Commercial Workers.

Plumrose — whose labels also include Elcona, Danola and Dak — was added to the list in the spring of 1994 after some 125 striking UFCW members were permanently replaced at the Danish-owned company's Elkhart, Ind., plant.

The UFCW informed the federation in an April 5 letter that the dispute had been settled.

IBT, IATSE in agreement

The Teamsters and the Theatrical Stage Employees signed an agreement to combine efforts to organize non-union productions and conventions.

The unions will work closely together to "protect and expand good jobs in the movie industry and trade shows."

"The Teamsters and IATSE have helped create good wages and benefits in the industry," IBT President Ron Carey said. "While studios and stars are making millions of dollars, the people behind the scenes should at least be able to lead a decent life."

BLE celebrates 132 years

The Locomotive Engineers celebrated the union's 132nd anniversary on May 8 at its Cleveland headquarters. BLE was organized May 8, 1863, by 12 engineers in Detroit as the "Brotherhood of the Footboard." The name was changed a year later because the public was not familiar with the footboard.

BLE also celebrated its 12th consecutive month of net membership growth. The majority of new members are locomotive engineers, train traffic controllers and dispatchers.

Laborers sign HUD pact

The Laborers signed a $3.5 million agreement with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to train public housing residents in construction crafts and lead and environmental abatement.

"This is more than just a job-training program for residents of public housing, but a real opportunity for training to translate into solid and stable employment for people who want to work hard and provide a decent life for their families," said LIUNA President Arthur A. Coia.

The agreement is similar to one signed in February by the Carpenters. HUD will award demonstration grants to public housing authorities that work with the Laborers' Institute for Training and Education. Money will be made available in 40 major cities.

More than 100 killed in South Africa mine

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland expressed organized labor's condolences to the families and fellow union members of more than 100 workers who were killed when a 12-ton underground train engine and carriage plunged down a mine shaft in South Africa's Vaal Reefs mine May 10.

"Recent events, both here and in South Africa, highlight the need for stronger government-mandated workplace safety laws," Kirkland said in a letter to James Motlatsi, president of South Africa's National Union of Mineworkers. "As we have learned the hard way, without such intervention, businesses will continue to seek profit at any cost — even at the cost of workers' lives."

The NUM has charged that the deaths were caused by negligence by the mine's management. Union inspectors found that safety barriers that would have prevented the accident had been removed.

Kirkland observed that the mine workers died less than two weeks after U.S. unions observed Workers Memorial Day, a day set aside to mourn those who have been killed and injured in the workplace and to renew the fight to protect the living.



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

Would you buy a used car from this man? Charles McDonald, president of Union Privilege, passes out toy cars to Executive Council members to make the point that programs for used car sales and auto insurance are coming to Union Privilege. Current programs like the MasterCard, legal services and the home mortgage plan remain very popular with union members, McDonald said. **See Story, Page 6.**

NEWSMAKERS

National Labor Relations Board General Counsel **Fred Feinstein** has named **Mary Joyce Carlson** special counsel for the agency. Carlson was special counsel for the Teamsters and served as an associate general counsel for AFSCME.

Richard Womack, AFL-CIO civil rights director, will serve as interim executive director of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, succeeding **Ralph G. Neas,** who retired. The LCCR is an umbrella group of unions, the AFL-CIO and civil rights organizations. Womack will continue as federation civil rights director while at LCCR, AFL-CIO President **Lane Kirkland** told the Executive Council at its May meeting.

Ellen Bravo, executive director of 9to5, the National Association of Working Women, marked the 20th anniversary of Service Employees District 925 with an address to the faculty, staff and students at Brandeis University. District 925 represents many of the university's workers.

AWARDS

Dorothy Shields, director of the AFL-CIO Education Department, was honored with the Chancellor's Distinguished Leadership in Working People's Education from the University of Massachusetts/Boston. The award recognizes contributions by women and men to working people through their commitment to education and organizing.

DEATH

Harold Buoy, retired Boilermakers president, died at his Overland Park, Kan., home May 5. He was 73.

Buoy began his career serving as a Boilermaker apprenticeship on the Wabash Railroad. A keen student of government, Buoy was appointed legislative assistant for the union in 1962. He was appointed acting president in April 1970 and elected by convention vote in 1973, 1977 and 1981. Buoy also served as vice president of the Building and Construction Trades Department and the Metal Trades Department at the AFL-CIO.

"All of us who had the honor to work with him in the labor movement have had the deepest respect for his lifelong dedication to his union and to the best interests of all working men and women and their families," AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland said.

Buoy is survived by his wife, a brother and four sisters.

Proclamation: May is Labor History Month

Declaring that labor unions have benefited Americans at every level, President Clinton proclaimed May as Labor History Month.

The United States has been built on "the determination of workers to find dignity in their work and meaning in their citizenship," Clinton said. "The labor movement has long given voice to these aspirations."

"American trade unionists have fought for and achieved benefits for all of us by strengthening citizens' roles in the workplace and by expanding their participation in the political lives of their communities," he said.

Besides working to gain benefits on the jobs that most Americans now enjoy, "the labor movement has strived to make public education available for every child," Clinton said. "American workers have helped to make this progress possible, and our country is immeasurably stronger because of it."

Besides acknowledging the historical importance of unions, Clinton envisioned an important role for labor in the future.

"Today's global marketplace demands that we establish and strengthen partnerships between employers and unions, cooperate to achieve safe, high-performance work environments, improve the skills of American workers and the competitiveness of American business and further enhance human dignity in the workplace," he said.

RESOURCES

CONFERENCE

The New York State AFL-CIO Industrial Division is sponsoring its statewide conference June 18-20 at the Albany Omni Hotel in Albany, N.Y. Contact Ed Aspinall at 518/436-8516.

PUBLICATIONS

The Operating Engineers National Training Program has published **Workplace Diversity: Achieving a Unified Workforce,** a new manual that includes diversity training tips, training modules and guides to handouts and videos. Copies are available from Edna Primrose at 202/429-9100.

Construction Craft Jurisdiction Agreements, 1995 Edition includes the full, original text of 62 binding agreements made among the country's 15 building trades unions. Copies are $45 plus tax, shipping and handling. To order, write Bureau of National Affairs Books, P.O. Box 7814, Edison, N.J. 08818-7814; or call 800/960-1220.

A new **Cesar Chavez Curriculum** — a videotape, comprehensive teacher's guide, student handouts, suggested readings, song book, poster, coloring book and discussion questions — has been developed by the Farm Workers. Copies are $9.95 each up to 25, $8.95 up to 100 copies, $7.95 up to 200 and $6.95 for 201 or more. Mail orders to the UFW Curriculum Project, Attn. Jocelyn Sherman, P.O. Box 62, Keene, Calif., 93531.

AFL-CIO NEWS

VOLUME 40, NUMBER 11 MAY 22, 1995



Gary Tarlton

In a march for justice in Salem, Ore., some 10,000 state employees sent a message to the Republican legislature.

Oregon workers strike reopens talks

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

Some 17,000 Oregon state employees ended a five-day strike May 15 that enlightened state negotiators and reopened negotiations.

"The strike sparked the movement the union wanted to achieve at the bargaining table, so it was called off," said Bentley Gilbert, spokesman for the Oregon Public Employees Union/SEIU. Negotiators said they made progress in talks May 14.

A key breakthrough in the talks has been the state's willingness to spend some of the surplus in a joint trust fund that pays health benefits for OPEU-represented workers. The state also made some movement toward the 6.5 percent wage increase recommended by a fact finder in late March.

Initially, the state offered a paltry 2 percent pay raise. By the end of the strike, it had increased its offer to 6 percent — 3 percent by July 1 and another 3 percent in November 1996.

The two-year contract doesn't expire until June 30 but contains a clause allowing the union to reopen negotiations in the second year. The strike was aimed at convincing the state that it should accept the 6.5 percent pay raise recommendation for the remainder of the contract, retroactive to April 1.

The strike action included a rally of some 10,000 workers in Salem, the state capital, and meetings with state legislators and civil disobedience activity. It included health care workers, clerical employees, tax collectors, accountants and highway workers.

The negotiations are set against a backdrop of a tight-fisted Republican legislature and the passage of a ballot measure in November 1994 requiring state and local workers to begin paying 6 percent of their salaries to their pension plan. The 6 percent contribution by SEIU members is scheduled to begin July 1 when their current contract expires.

Gov. John Kitzhaber (D) recommended $52 million from the 1995-97 general fund be used for state worker raises. But his budget called for the money to go to raises for the most underpaid state jobs and not for a general wage increase.

The proposed legislature's budget, however, does not earmark any money specifically for state worker wages, though it calls for a general reserve that could be used for salary increases as well as other items. Republicans control both chambers of the legislature for the first time in 40 years, but they do not have a veto-proof majority.

A special governor's Task Force on State Employee Compensation recommended all state workers get a 2 percent increase July 1 and the remainder of the $52 million be used to bring all occupations to at least 92.5 percent of the market rate.

SEIU last struck the state in 1987 during a nine-day "rolling" strike, with members striking different agencies on different days.

The strike affected all agencies except public safety facilities, where public safety workers are prohibited from striking.

Right-to-work threat hangs over states

As legislative sessions wind down, some state lawmakers are making last-ditch efforts to pass right-to-work measures, AFL-CIO Department of Organization and Field Services Director Joseph Shantz told the AFL-CIO Executive Council.

"The 1995 sessions of state legislatures have shown the greatest increase in right-to-work activity over a decade because of significant Republican gains achieved last November," Shantz said.

Right-to-work measures have been defeated in many legislatures, but the battle continues in Oklahoma, California, Idaho, Indiana, Oregon and Pennsylvania, Shantz explained.

The Oklahoma House labor committee rejected right-to-work legislation by an 8-5 vote, but a floor amendment to the bill allowing for an Oct. 10, 1995, ballot vote on the issue was adopted by a 73-23 vote. The Senate committee then voted 8-4 to table the bill.

Gov. Frank Keating (R) has said he supports right to work in the name of economic development. But the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that 100,000 new non-government jobs were created in Oklahoma between 1988 and 1993 and manufacturing employment grew by 4.03 percent. Nationally, manufacturing jobs declined by 7.8 percent.

In Oregon, petitions are being circulated for signatures in support of right to work for the 1996 ballot, Shantz told the council. "Petitioners are paid for every signature they get," he said. Proponents have until July 1996 to gather the signatures, but the same initiative failed in 1994.

Legislation also passed by a 16-13 vote in the Senate that would eliminate fair share or any form of union security from the 1973 Public Employee Collective Bargaining Act.

The bill, which Oregon Gov. John Kitzhaber (D) said he will veto, would only allow the employer to request arbitration, limit the filing of unfair labor practices to 90 days, establish a filing fee and create a civil penalty of $1,000 per day against a labor organization and each public employee involved in an "illegal strike."

The state House also passed a joint resolution stating that an employee may not be required to make payments to an organization that is involved in political activities contrary to the beliefs of the employee.

Meanwhile, in Pennsylvania, the Senate voted to repeal the state's fair-share fees for local government employees, state employees and school teachers.

A hearing on right-to-work legislation was held in Rhode Island, Shantz said, but no action was taken and the committee is not expected to vote.

Successful campaigns against these assaults on workers have been organized across the country, said Shantz. Thus far, labor has won right-to-work battles in Maryland, Montana, Colorado, Georgia, Kansas, New Hampshire and New Mexico.

— Sharolyn A. Rosier

INSIDE

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL



At a news conference, AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland introduces AFGE Local 3138 President Jane Graham, an Oklahoma City bombing survivor **(Story, Page 5)**, and Georges Exceus, the ACTWU member who won the Red Cross humanitarian award for his work in Haiti **(Page 6)**.

5. *Strategic Approaches Committee takes on "privatization laboratory."*

6. *AFL-CIO defends ILO, efforts to build democracy abroad.*

7. *Affirmative action at leading edge of fight for civil rights.*

7. *Labor champions public's right to information superhighway.*

UNION YES

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AFL-CIO NEWS

VOLUME 40, NUMBER 12

JUNE 5, 1995



The 50th Union Industries Show in Detroit was a big day for Brianna Marshall, 2. **See FOCUS, Page 9.**



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland joined Postal Workers President Moe Biller and more than 5,000 postal workers from across the country in a rally in Washington to protest proposed cuts in federal employees' retirement benefits and to demand a fair contract from the U.S. Postal Service. Workers also lobbied members of Congress and set up informational pickets at Postal Service headquarters, where they opposed plans to privatize USPS. Most Americans oppose privatization, a new poll shows. **See UNION NEWS, Page 11.**

GOP budget strips workers to coddle rich

Medicare, education, job safety threatened

By Mike Hall

Republican majorities in the House and Senate have rammed through budget resolutions that would force working families to pay more for Medicare and higher education to fund massive tax breaks for the rich.

Following a radical blueprint outlined May 18 by the House, the Senate resolution, which passed May 25 on a 57-42 vote, "would put an altogether unacceptable burden on American workers and their families," AFL-CIO Legislative Director Peggy Taylor said in a letter to the Senate.

The cuts would "dramatically reduce the health and economic security of the elderly, cut back substantially on educational opportunities for working families, and threaten the health and safety of workers on the job," she said.

President Clinton, who opposes the cuts, cannot veto a resolution. He can, however, veto specific appropriations and tax cut bills once they are passed.

The resolution calls for cutting some $1 trillion in federal spending over the next seven years. The biggest hit would come from more than $430 billion in cuts from the Medicare and Medicaid programs that provide health care for senior citizens and the poor. "It's a budget that takes away unfairly from our seniors, our children and the less fortunate, but disproportionately and unfairly lines the pockets of the wealthiest among us," said Sen. James J. Exon (D-Neb.), ranking minority member of the Budget Committee.

The Medicare cuts alone will cost America's retired and elderly an extra $3,500 during the next seven years. Along with the $256 billion cut in Medicare, the Senate bill axes $175 billion from Medicaid, which could dry up medical benefits for elderly people confined to nursing homes and poor children. The cost of that care will "shift" to workers with health insurance, raising their premiums.

The Senate resolution, unlike the House version, does not include a specific tax cut. Senate Republicans instead plan to use $170 billion in supposed savings to pay for a vague tax cut later.

The Senate rejected efforts to spread the burden more fairly across all segments of the economy. First

Continued on Page 3

AT&T, unions keep talking

Retiree health benefits a major sticking point

By James B. Parks

Retiree health benefits is the major stumbling block in contract negotiations affecting 110,000 workers at AT&T, but negotiators agreed to set aside that contentious issue and move on to other questions.

Although workers authorized a strike, talks have continued since the May 27 expiration of the contracts. The unions involved — Communications Workers and Electrical Workers — have no plans or a deadline set for a strike. "We're assessing progress in the talks as they go along," CWA spokesman Jeff Miller said.

The talks, which began April 3, reached a stalemate May 31 over whether retirees should pay some of the costs for health care. The negotiators decided to set that issue aside and to discuss other key questions such as union security, subcontracting, wages and pensions.

AT&T, which posted a record $4.7 billion net profit last year, offered an 8 percent raise over three years, a figure Miller called "insultingly low."

But the major stumbling block was the issue of retiree health care. AT&T wants the 22,000 union employees who retired after March 1990 to share their benefit costs. The 66,000 employees who retired before then would not be affected.

The unions want to extend a tentative health agreement reached May 30 to include retirees. Under the agreement, employees could participate in an improved managed-care plan, with premiums fully paid by the company. The retirees now participate in a different program that is company-paid.

"The company seems determined to stick it to

Continued on Page 7

Justice delivered by ACTWU in first contract in Dallas

By Muriel H. Cooper

The Clothing and Textile Workers gained a groundbreaking first contract with Fojtasek Companies that seeks to reverse years of discrimination and unfair treatment against a work force that is largely immigrant Latina women.

In gaining a large measure of justice for the 1,200 production workers at the Dallas manufacturer, ACTWU pledged that the contract is only the beginning of its drive to bring union benefits to workers in "right-to-work" Texas.

Workers at Fojtasek's four plants, which manufacture windows and doors, voted overwhelmingly for a three-year agreement that also brings needed improvements in wages, benefits and workplace safety.

The contract will cover the largest private-sector unit in Dallas, ACTWU said. The company sells its products under such brand names as The Atrium Door & Window Company, H-R Windows, Skotty Aluminum Products and Extruders, Inc.

"This is an historic moment for the labor and Latino communities of Dallas to share with this courageous group of workers," said Joan Suarez, an ACTWU vice president and chief negotiator for the talks. She hailed the long-suffering workers' determination in their battle for racial and economic justice.

Suarez expected the victory would be repeated elsewhere in the Dallas area. "We are confident that many Latino workers will ask us to help them organize and gain respect," she said.

The union won representation rights by a 3-to-1 margin in 1993, then followed up in February 1995 with charges filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission that alleged widespread discrimination in pay and promotions and said workers' treatment was based on ethnicity.

Most of the workers, newcomers from South and Central America, were making only $6 an hour while training less-skilled non-immigrants who received higher pay. When they spoke up about the discriminatory practice, 15 workers were fired.

Continued on Page 2

ORGANIZING

IBT wins big in school

The Teamsters are celebrating a huge election win in Tulsa, Okla., as they prepare to bargain for about 3,400 Tulsa school employees — everyone except teachers and principals.

The new members of IBT Local 523 must wait 60 days for state certification of the election, but they hope to negotiate a contract before the beginning of the new school year. The key issues are contracting out and basing promotions and transfers on standard, written personnel policies.

"Tulsa school employees want to work with the administration on a contract that improves service to the children and their parents," said Coleman Davis, Local 523 president. "The community will benefit from a staff that's treated fairly."

Davis said the union would fight efforts by the administration to contract out food service and custodial work, noting that turning over groundskeeping to a private company increased the number of supervisors without any improvement of the grounds.

"We need to improve working conditions and reduce turnover," he said. "That's what will save taxpayers money."

BCT gains 5 sweet wins

The Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers recently racked up five victories involving about 500 workers.

After a six-month campaign, employees at the Keebler Emerald Snack food plant in Oxford, Pa., voted 66 to 42 for representation, renewing a relationship that had become strained three years ago when the company opened its second non-union plant.

"Today's victory will be the beginning of the healing process that must take place," said BCT President Frank Hurt.

The union also scored wins at Klosterman Baking Co. in Springfield, Ohio; Pro Baking in Buffalo, N.Y.; Millstone Coffee in Henderson, Ky.; and Campagna-Turano Baking in Berwyn, Ill.

Steelworkers pick up 500

Citing the need for job dignity, about 500 workers at Unarco Commercial Products in Wagoner, Okla., voted for representation with the Steelworkers. The vote was 227-212.

Plant workers said they approached the union because of unfair work rules, safety issues, low wages and the need for health benefits. Unarco is one of the largest manufacturer of shopping carts in the nation.

Judge: 'Not in my court'

An Illinois attorney was lawfully dismissed for attempting to organize court employees, according to a federal appeals court.

The 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that John Gregorich's effort to unionize would threaten the "delicate working relationship" between judges and research attorneys.

"The relationship between the judge and the staff attorneys involves the sharing of intellectual confidences," wrote the court. Someone with Gregorich's responsibilities "had an obligation to refrain from taking such an adversarial role to the court."

Gregorich contacted the Teamsters about organizing the court after losing vacation benefits because of a change in court rules.



ACTWU photo

Miami workers at Atrium, which sells Fojtasek windows and doors, rally in support of Dallas production workers.

Fojtasek workers win first contract

Continued from Page 1

The discrimination charges, as well as those pending with the National Labor Relations Board, were resolved upon contract ratification. The workers were reinstated and awarded $240,000 in back pay.

"This contract means we will finally get the respect for our hard work and our proud heritage that has been denied to us," said Moises Cuevas, one of the workers who was suspended from the company after leading a protest against management's retaliatory tactics following the filing of a discrimination charge.

Fojtasek agreed to a series of steps that will address past discrimination problems, Suarez said. The company will sponsor sensitivity training for supervisors and English-as-a-second-language courses. It also will begin an affirmative action policy to promote the advancement of female workers.

Pay grades will be based on the level of difficulty and skill required for each job. All workers will receive a base increase of 55 cents per hour over the term of the contract. Other upgrades, determined by job title, will raise wages for about half the workers by as much as an additional 55 percent.

For example, a "window parts" worker who now earns $5 an hour will get a $2.80-an-hour increase plus the 20-cents base increase for the first year, bringing the new wage to $8 per hour.

Workers also will receive a new health benefits package that will net up to a 63 percent savings on family coverage.

Call to local AFL-CIO gets results

Who you gonna call when your job and benefits are under attack?

If you work in Dorchester County on Maryland's Eastern Shore, you look up UNION, or in this case AFL-CIO. The workers called the Del-Mar-Va Peninsula AFL-CIO, which then put them in touch with AFSCME Council 67.

With union help, 50 workers in the county's roads department were able to turn back a proposal that could have resulted in a loss of benefits and grievance procedures, as well as onerous new work rules.

The workers found themselves under attack when the newly elected Republican county commissioners wanted the state to repeal a 48-year-old ordinance that gave the roads department workers parity with state workers in benefits, salary and grievance procedures.

"I got a call from a worker who felt that their group, the Maryland Classified Employees Association, would not represent them as well as a union," said Robert Scharpf, president of the Del-Mar-Va AFL-CIO. "They wanted a real union behind them."

"The association did not help us or try to represent us," said Arlene Meredith, a supervisor in the roads department. "The union understood what we were going through."

More than half of the workers joined AFSCME Local 2338, which worked with Council 67, the local AFL-CIO and other county workers to convince state legislators to defeat the repeal bill.

"These workers were incredible," said Thomas Kelleher, an organizer for Council 67. "We had two busloads attend committee hearings. Workers used their personal vacation days to go to Annapolis to lobby legislators, and they got other county workers to get involved.

"Together we defeated a local bill — ordinarily defined as 'courtesy legislation' that should have passed easily in the statehouse," Kelleher said.

Other county workers joined in the fight because "they understood that if we lost our job protections, they could lose theirs," said Meredith, a 26-year county employee.

"We were fighting for our jobs," she said. "If the legislation was repealed we could have lost our job security. The commissioners could come in one day and say 'we don't need you.' If we didn't have the union we would have lost."

The service provided by the union also has helped boost the area labor movement.

"Our popularity in the Delmarva area is higher than I can ever remember it," said Scharpf. "We now have politicians asking for our support."

— Muriel H. Cooper

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Director of Information: Rex Hardesty

Editor: Michael Byrne

Assistant Editors: Candice Johnson, David Kameras, James B. Parks

Staff Writers: Muriel H. Cooper, Mike Hall Colleen M. O'Neill, Sharolyn A. Rosier

Graphics/Layout: Stan Hitt, Hindi M. Fracasse

AFL-CIO Headquarters: 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006
Telephone: (202) 637-5010
CompuServe: 76004, 3601

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Milwaukee AFL-CIO

Wisconsin unionists gathered for an AFL-CIO Transportation Trades Department rally in Milwaukee.

Budget plan 'blueprint for disaster'

Workers rally to save transportation, good jobs

By David Kameras

Workers rallied in Milwaukee May 18 to urge rejection of proposed budget cuts that would "decimate transportation investments, kill jobs and trample on workers' rights."

Approximately 300 citizens from across the state demonstrated at the Milwaukee Amtrak station in a rally sponsored by the AFL-CIO Transportation Trades Department, urging policy-makers in Washington, "Don't turn back the clock on America's families."

TTD President Ron Carey described a "blueprint for disaster" — attacks on such programs as Amtrak, highway infrastructure, airports, air traffic control, job safety enforcement and assistance for workers harmed by the North American Free Trade Agreement.

"If common sense prevails in this debate, these proposals should not see the light of day," he said.

"It is quite clear that the Washington insiders are placing politics over the American people," Carey said. "The Budget Committee proposals would leave this country with an enormous investment gap at the expense of programs vital to our economy and future generations of workers."

The House Transportation and Infrastructure subcommittee on rail reported out a bill that would continue federal subsidies for Amtrak, but would also weaken such job protections as length of severance compensation, restrictions on contracting out and reemployment rights at Conrail. Another provision would encourage agreements "that promote the potential privatization of Amtrak operations," a move strongly opposed by the AFL-CIO.

"Why Congress is insisting on substituting itself for negotiations between parties, and why we are insisting on provisions on behalf of management which not even management is insisting on, I do not understand," complained Rep. Norman Y. Mineta (D-Calif.).

"The legislation "virtually wipes out all labor protection afforded its workers," said Rep. Jack Quinn (R-N.Y.), who offered a successful amendment allowing the right to permit labor-management negotiations over protections.

In addition to calling attention to transportation infrastructure and funding issues, the Milwaukee rally mobilized working families to protest federal program cuts being considered in Washington, said Edward Wytkind, the department's executive director.

The House Budget Committee has moved to repeal the Davis-Bacon and Service Contract acts, effectively slashing wages for millions of working Americans. The 40-hour workweek, the federal minimum wage and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration also are being considered for the scrap heap.

"We view such proposals as direct assaults on working men and women in cities across this country," Carey said. "Congress and the president must reject efforts designed to allow federal government contractors to obtain lucrative contracts on the backs of communities and their local workers."

Protesters rejected the notion that the so-called revolution declared by House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) has enlisted broad grass-roots support.

"The American people will support sensible budget reforms and tax fairness," Carey said. "But they did not vote in November to gut transportation investments, workers' rights and job safety enforcement to pay for unnecessary tax cuts for the privileged."

Other rally speakers included Jim Baker, executive assistant to AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland; Wytkind; David Newby, Wisconsin AFL-CIO president; Bruce Colburn, secretary-treasurer of Milwaukee AFL-CIO; and Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist.

Shanker: Education cuts devastating

Continued from Page 1

it rejected an amendment by Sen. Jay Rockefeller (D-W.Va.) to take $100 billion earmarked for the tax cut and use it to more equitably fund Medicare and Medicaid over the next seven years.

It also refused to reduce the projected tax cut in order to restore $40 billion for education programs, defeating an amendment offered by Sens. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) and Ernest F. Hollings (D-S.C.) by a 51-47 vote.

The Senate bill cuts education funding by more than $67 billion. Included are massive cuts in the student loan program, which would force workers and their children to pay more for a college education or not go to college at all.

"Never before have we faced any proposal with the devastating consequences that this will have if adopted," said AFT President Albert Shanker. Those who back the resolution "would put a halt to our investment in education and our efforts to reform it," he said.

Safety and health in the workplace would be dramatically undercut by a 50 percent reduction in funding for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the Mine Safety and Health Administration. **(See Story, Page 4).**

The House passed, on a 238-193 vote, a budget resolution calling for some $1.4 trillion in spending cuts, with more than $400 billion coming from reduced Medicare and Medicaid spending, repeal of Davis-Bacon, cuts in OSHA and MSHA funds, huge cuts in anti-poverty and mass transit programs and the elimination of entire government departments, agencies and hundreds of programs.

The House bill also provides for a $340 billion tax cut for people making up to $200,000, and eliminates even a bare minimum tax on corporations, known as the alternative minimum tax.

'Back-home' drive turns up heat on representatives

By Mike Hall

The AFL-CIO chose five congressional districts for special Memorial Day recess activities and worked in coalition with other groups to highlight the dangers to middle-class America from the massive Medicare/Medicaid cuts in the Republican budget resolutions.

The grass-roots activities continue the AFL-CIO's Stand UP campaign, which was expanded during the three-week April recess. By the Memorial Day break, the full extent of the massive GOP budget cuts in education, Medicare, workplace safety and other vital programs had become clear.

"If allowed to proceed unchallenged, this GOP budget will accelerate the growth of a two-tiered American society," AFL-CIO Legislative Director Peggy Taylor said. "Those few well-off and the corporations on the top tier will continue to receive tax cuts, subsidies and other special benefits, while American workers are forced to accept job cuts and wage concessions in the midst of unprecedented corporate profits and executive salaries."

Taylor noted that Democratic members of Congress have rallied to the cause of working families "and also some Republican members are expressing a willingness to listen on many of the issues."

House Minority Whip David E. Bonior (D-Mich.) urged a wholesale effort against the radical GOP budget cuts and predicted "immense pressure on those lawmakers who want to get rid of student loans, school lunches" and other programs.

Maintaining "back-home" pressure on lawmakers will be crucial as Congress begins to consider proposals to gut OSHA and the Davis-Bacon and Service Contract acts, as well as the so-called TEAM Act to allow company unions.

The five districts selected for special activity during the recess were those of Greg Ganske (R-Iowa), Dick Chrysler (R-Mich.) John R. Kasich (R-Ohio), Greg Laughlin (D-Texas) and Bill Martini (R-N.J.).

In those districts, the AFL-CIO provided radio ads and coordinators to work with local union officials and legislative action committees. Other activity included direct mail, jobsite leafletting, phone call drives using the AFL-CIO's toll-free hotline, petition drives, town meeting attendance, and letters and columns submitted to local newspapers.

The grass-roots lobbying message was guided by a Peter A. Hart poll on which a preliminary report was made to the May meeting of the AFL-CIO Executive Council.

The poll, commissioned by the AFL-CIO, found both union members and the general public strongly oppose the GOP assault on the middle class to pay for tax cuts for the wealthy and big corporations.

For example, union members and the general public both object to Republican cuts in Medicare, OSHA and programs to make college affordable — the issues mentioned in the AFL-CIO radio ads. Union member support runs 80 percent for protecting Social Security and Medicare, 74 percent for workplace health and safety programs and 69 percent for federal college tuition programs.

The poll also shows astronomical figures — higher than 80 percent — in union member support to make companies guarantee pension funds, in opposition to tampering with the laws on the 40-hour week and for strengthening equal pay for equal work.

Rallies aimed at exposing the massive Medicare cut proposals were scheduled to take place June 1 at hospitals in Oregon, aimed at Sens. Mark O. Hatfield (R) and Robert Packwood (R); in Iowa, aimed at Sen. Charles E. Grassley (R); in Wisconsin, for Rep. Steve Gunderson (R); in Connecticut, for Rep. Christopher Shays (R); in Florida, for Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R); in Illinois, for Rep. Michael Flanagan (R); in Virginia, for Rick Boucher (D); in Minnesota, for Rep. Collin Peterson (D); and in New Jersey, for Rep. Robert E. Andrews (D).

In addition, a number of unions worked through the Jobs with Justice coalition to mount a series of rallies in 22 cities, beginning May 31.

Labor geared to fight 'irresponsible' OSHA cuts

By Colleen M. O'Neill

Current and future funding for job safety and health initiatives remain very much up in the air, held hostage by the Republican majority in Congress.

The Senate-passed rescission bill for current year funding restored most of the cuts made by the House to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration budget, but included language prohibiting work on the five-year-old ergonomics standard.

President Clinton has said he will veto the measure when it reaches his desk, likely to come after the Memorial Day recess ends June 4.

In terms of future funding, the Senate passed a budget resolution May 24 that included cutting the OSHA and the Mine Safety and Health Administration budgets in half for next year. Under congressional procedure, it now falls to the Senate Appropriations Committee to decide how to dole out the money.

The House version seeks to combine OSHA and MSHA and cut that one budget by 20 percent. Funding for the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health would be reduced by 25 percent each year until the agency is eliminated in 1999.

The drastic cuts were part of the dubious equation formulated by Republicans in an effort to balance the budget in seven years.

"The Senate's proposed 50 percent cut in our fiscal year 1996 budget would totally devastate OSHA's efforts to fulfill its congressionally mandated mission of assuring safe and healthful working conditions for all Americans," said OSHA Administrator Joseph A. Dear. "It would drastically curtail, if not eliminate, many of our programs to protect working men and women.

"Frankly, this is irresponsible," he said. "We just can't write America's workers off. The protection of the health and safety of our workers must be one of our highest national priorities."

> *"We just can't write America's workers off. The protection of the health and safety of our workers must be one of our highest national priorities."*
>
> **— OSHA Administrator Joseph A. Dear**

"Gutting OSHA was not what the voters had in mind last November," said Peg Seminario, AFL-CIO director of job safety and health. "Every year, 56,000 Americans die from work-related accidents and illnesses. On an average day, 17 working Americans are killed in safety accidents, nearly 140 others die from occupational disease, and another 16,000 are injured.

"Stripping funds from OSHA's budget in such a large measure means a catastrophic loss of protection for American workers," she said.

Cutting OSHA's $312 million budget in half would decimate enforcement, delay new standards, curtail consultation and eliminate training and education programs, the agency said.

The report of the House Budget Committee also makes clear the intent of lawmakers is not "reform," but harsh curtailment. Specifically mentioned as targets for "elimination or reform" are indoor air quality regulations, chemical inventory reporting requirements, ergonomics rule development, rules prohibiting teenagers from performing some hazardous jobs and the development of comprehensive workplace safety and health programs.

Meanwhile, H.R. 994 has been reported out of subcommittee, with floor action possible soon after the recess. The measure would establish a mandatory review of all federal regulations, with a sunset period, probably eliminating many existing job safety protections.

The Senate, too, is working on regulatory reform, with GOP lawmakers trying to meld three bills into one vehicle for floor action. All of the measures call for federal agencies to conduct risk assessments and cost/benefit analyses for major regulations.

The unkindest cut of all is still in the wings, and the federation and its affiliated unions are gearing up for that expected legislative attack on OSHA by Rep. Cass Ballenger (R-N.C.).

The draft Ballenger measure seeks to combine MSHA and OSHA while repealing the stronger standards of the Mine Safety and Health Act. It also would eliminate NIOSH.

In addition, the draft package would prohibit job safety citations and penalties for all but the most serious cases — in which a worker was killed or hospitalized — and would roll back maximum penalties that could be levied. A more consultative role would be developed for the agency as well, and employees also would not be allowed to complain to OSHA without first going to the employer.

"The threat of Ballenger's bill presents us with a tremendous opportunity to notify our members on the awful legislation coming from the Republicans, as well as to stand up for workers' rights to a safe and healthy workplace," Seminario said.

"Turning OSHA into a consultant, and setting up a process that excludes the workers on site who know best the problems at that job, is a slap in the face to everyone who puts his life on the line to make a living."

In addition, the AFL-CIO is readying an activists' kit pegged to Ballenger's bill, which will include a summary of the measure, tips on dealing with the media, and other materials so workers can have an effective opposition voice.

SEIU: End greed by corporations, pay living wage

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

First lady Hillary Rodham Clinton told the Service Employees legislative conference that she hoped in the next few months to mount a "big push" for increasing the minimum wage.

She urged the 600 union activists to join that fight, as well as the administration's efforts to restore training and education cuts, defend the Occupational Safety and Health Act and reverse cuts in child nutrition programs.

Calling the minimum wage "a family value," Clinton said a higher wage floor, combined with the Earned Income Tax Credit, would lift lower income people to $27,000 to $30,000 a year. It's not just a matter of dollars and sense, but "respect and dignity," she said.

The delegates heard a number of speakers lambaste the Republican leadership in Congress for offering tax breaks for corporations and the wealthy at the expense of worker rights and protections, and marched to Capitol Hill to lobby their individual members of Congress.

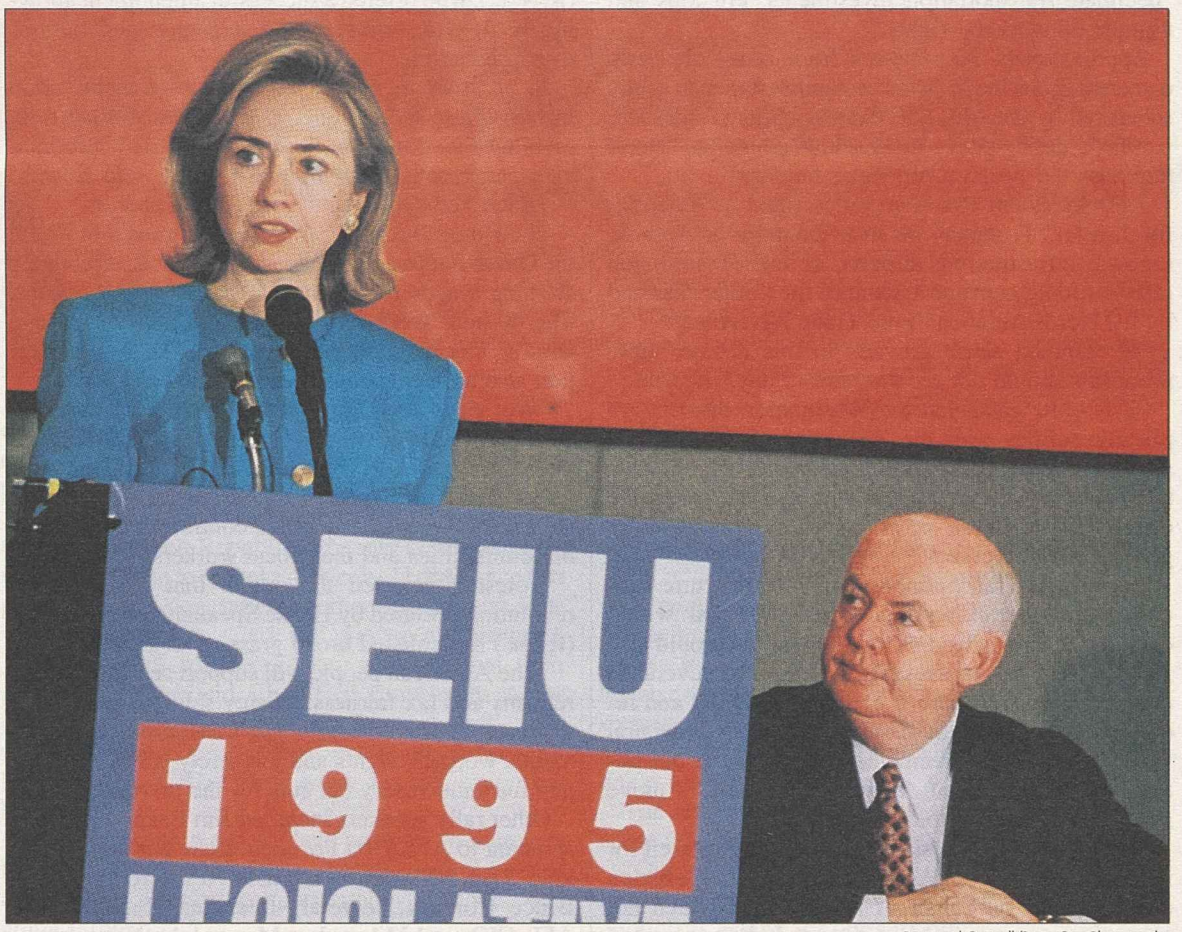
SEIU President John J. Sweeney also led the delegates in a demonstration against corporations that receive billions in tax grants, subsidies and tax breaks, as the unionists took to the streets with the chant: "A living wage is what we need, put an end to corporate greed."

With some members decked out as a Sunkist orange or a Pillsbury cake-mix box, they rallied in front of the Republican Capitol Hill Club.

"This is where the corporate lobbyists and their legislative lackeys gather daily to plot their plunder," Sweeney told the crowd. "We came here so the American taxpayers could see and hear them slurping at the public trough."

Using tactics refined by the union's Justice for Janitors campaign, 65 SEIU members also staged a sit-in on the walkway of the club. Thirty-two of the 65 were arrested and charged with blocking the entrance.

Among other corporations cited by the union for "welfare cheating" were Gerber, Sun Diamond, IBM, General Electric, Federal Express, Intel, Tyson Foods and Mitsubishi.



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

Hillary Rodham Clinton, with SEIU President John J. Sweeney, appeals for support of higher minimum wage.

In a speech to the delegates, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue warned that the very existence of worker-run unions is jeopardized by GOP attempts to amend Section 8(a)(2) of the National Labor Relations Act. He called this legislation "perhaps the greatest threat to unions."

The so-called Teamwork for Employees and Managers (TEAM) Act would modify Section 8(a)(2) restrictions on employer-dominated unions. President Clinton has said he will veto the bill if it passes, but unions must press legislators to sustain the veto, Donahue said.

House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.) and Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D), delegate for the District of Columbia, reminded the workers that similar radical budget plans, including massive tax breaks for the rich, were responsible in the Reagan-Bush years for producing the deficit that Republicans say they are trying to balance.

"What we did in the budget last week was nothing more than something from a radical think tank," said Norton. "The only budget that hasn't gotten zeroed is defense. We've got to turn 'em out. It's not saving we're against, it's raping."

"Something is sorely wrong," Gephardt said. "We can't wait until 1996 for change — you must tell them now while you are in Washington."

In addition to lobbying members of Congress, the SEIU members participated in issues and action workshops on health care, worker safety and health, immigration and affirmative action and employment and training.

Other speakers included Sens. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) and Patty Murray (D-Wash.); Gov. Howard Dean of Vermont; Reps. Chaka Fattah (D-Pa.), John Baldacci (D-Maine), Lynn Rivers (D-Mich.) and Jim McDermott (D-Wash.); Minyon Moore, political director for the Democratic National Committee; and Ruth Messinger, president of the Manhattan borough.

WORLD

Child labor reconsidered

Concerned about a possible boycott, the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association is reconsidering its rejection of a memorandum of understanding it negotiated to phase out child labor.

The agreement, negotiated with UNICEF, the Asian-American Free Labor Institute and other non-governmental organizations, would phase out the work of nearly 30,000 children over a two-year period and provide for their education, give preference to adult relatives of the children for jobs and establish an independent foundation to monitor compliance and educational planning.

Instead, the garment makers had passed a non-binding resolution calling on members to fire all children from the factories by Oct. 31 and establish an internal industry committee to oversee the effort.

When that action was declared inadequate by the Child Labor Coalition, which threatened to lead a U.S. boycott of BGMEA products, the leadership of the organization announced that it would reconsider. The AFL-CIO is a member of the CLC, which represents labor, consumer, women, religious and health care groups working to end the exploitation of children abroad and in the United States.

Maquila union recognized

For the first time in history, the Salvadoran government has recognized a trade union in the notoriously anti-union free trade zone.

Despite intense opposition and open intimidation by the management of the Mandarin maquiladora, the 1,000 female workers fulfilled all the requirements to gain legal recognition of their union by the country's labor ministry. In an effort to stop the union from forming, the management at one point fired all the employees, but later reinstated them.

The workers now are attempting to negotiate a first contract. To prevent this, the company has fired some 50 union activists.

Meanwhile, Juan Jose Hueso, general secretary of El Salvador's Fenastras labor federation, was arrested in a dispute with Jatex, a Korean-owned maquila in the free trade zone. Hueso was charged with aggression, destruction of private property and resisting arrest, according to local publications. Jatex recently fired some 65 employees for union activity.

Slave labor link exposed

Several U.S., French and Thai oil companies have been linked to the massive use of slave labor in the construction of a Burmese natural gas pipeline.

A joint venture combining oil giants Unocal and Total, the Thai PTTEP oil company and the Burmese military dictatorship has agreed to pipe gas to the Thai national electric company for $400 million a year. The military, with some logistical and intelligence help from Total, is preparing the way for the pipeline through the seizure of farm land, forced relocations and the use of slave labor brigades, according to refugees interviewed by the Bangkok Post.

Most Western oil company personnel won't arrive in the area until early 1996, after the slave-labor phase is over and pipeline engineering will begin. "That way the white guys can say with a straight face that they didn't see anything," said Kevin Heppner of the Karen Human Rights Group.

Korea attacks union

The South Korean government launched another attack on the independent Korean Council of Trade Unions (KCTU) when riot police recently beat and detained 30 trade union leaders and their supporters .

Eight workers were hospitalized with injuries ranging from brain damage to broken limbs. The next day the police stormed the hospital and dragged six of the injured workers to jail. The attack was so outrageous that even the government-backed labor federation, FKTU, condemned the actions.

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland wrote Secretary of State Warren Christopher urging rejection of South Korea's application to join the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development. The unprovoked attack on the trade unionists, which came only 20 days after the application, shows the Koreans do not intend to live up to the OECD's principles on democracy and human rights, reducing them to "a level of arrogance and brutality that is beyond comprehension," Kirkland said.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

AFSCME Secretary-Treasurer William Lucy, president of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, addresses a rally in front of the Nigerian embassy calling on that country's military dictator, Gen. Sani Abacha, to restore democracy to Africa's most populous nation. Abacha's regime has stripped Nigerians of basic human rights, dissolved labor unions and arrested their leaders, banned political activity, shut down publications and jailed or killed hundreds of its critics. Abacha reneged on a promise to restore democratic control over labor unions on May Day and instead announced new criminal investigations of the union leaders. AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland wrote Secretary of State Warren Christopher calling for international isolation and sanctions against Nigeria until it ends human rights abuses. Shown with Lucy are TransAfrica Executive Director Randall Robinson and Food and Commercial Workers Vice President Willie Baker. In an act of civil disobedience, Lucy, Baker, Robinson and Washington Metropolitan AFL-CIO President Joslyn Williams were arrested along with numerous civil rights leaders.

China trade-rights linkage urged

U.S. policy worsens workers' plight, AFL-CIO says

By David Kameras

Rejecting the Clinton administration's de-linkage of China's human rights and U.S. trade policy, labor and human rights groups urged Congress not to extend most-favored-nation status to a country that continues to abuse its own people.

In the year since rights and trade were de-linked, the human rights situation in China has deteriorated significantly, Jeffrey L. Fiedler, secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO Food and Allied Service Trades Department, testified May 23 before the House Ways and Means subcommittee on trade.

Fiedler criticized a U.S. policy that "has given the dollar primacy over decency and democracy, a policy which has been pushed by two presidents and approved by members from both parties in the House and Senate."

"Free and independent unions do not exist in China," Fiedler said. "They have been declared illegal. Over the past year, dozens of independent worker activists have been arrested and condemned to the Laogai (China's labor camps) for doing little more than talking to each other and circulating their thoughts on paper.

"They join hundreds of others, most of whom are unknown to the outside world, who have been jailed since 1989," the year democracy demonstrators were massacred in Tiananmen Square, he said.

Despite an August 1992 memorandum of understanding on prison labor, China has continued to ship forced labor products into the United States every day since then, Fiedler said, describing the MOU as "'the meaning of useless.' If the same level of compliance allowed the Chinese was accepted by the United Nations in its relations with Saddam Hussein, Iraqi oil would be flowing through American refineries."

The Laogai Research Foundation, of which Fiedler is a director, is completing an investigation that "will demonstrate that American companies are still importing products from the Laogai."

Also testifying was Mike Jendrzejczyk, Washington director of Human Rights Watch/Asia, who noted that as Deng Xiaoping's death approaches, "Chinese authorities have voiced increasing concern about maintaining 'social stability.'"

Representatives of other human rights groups provided the committee with numerous recent instances of rights violations and religious persecution, notably in Tibet. Rep. Frank R. Wolf (R-Va.) cited reports "that human fetuses are being sold as health food in government-run hospitals and private clinics," and the organs of executed prisoners are being sold on the black market.

Rep. Gerald B. H. Solomon (R-N.Y.), who plans to introduce a resolution opposing MFN, said he fears "that we have entered into a kind of partnership with China . . . that reveals that some elements in the American business community are so anxious to make a quick buck in China, and their supporters in government are so anxious to curry favor with the dictators in Beijing, that there is no policy or practice carried out by the Chinese Communist regime that we are not prepared to tolerate in the interest of preserving business as usual."

A provision in a State Department reorganization bill approved by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee would bar forced-labor imports from China.

Worker rights to forefront

The issue of worker rights also is absent from another trade measure — H.R. 553, the Caribbean Basin Trade Security Act. The bill would give multinationals and their maquiladora partners $240 million a year in reduced tariffs to bring their products into the U.S. market, paid for by cutting training programs for displaced U.S. workers.

The bill's author, Rep. Philip M. Crane (R-Ill.), has said that "linking environmental and labor issues to trade . . . is something which from our perspective is impermissible."

"Under this corporate agenda for the new world order, a company's intellectual property rights — labels, brand names, patents, etc. — will be protected, but not the rights of the people who produce the goods which carry the label," said Ladies' Garment Workers President Jay Mazur and Clothing and Textile Workers President Jack Sheinkman. "Labels, property and investments have rights, but the workers do not."

Trade unionists from throughout the hemisphere are preparing for an inter-American labor summit on worker rights and trade unions, which will be held in Denver June 29, one day before trade and finance ministers meet.

The labor leaders are expected to call for inclusion of worker rights and standards in the current trade negotiation process, establishment of a permanent labor commission and greater trade union participation in discussions relating to economic integration.

Rail workers agree on new safety rules

By David Kameras

Rail employees who work along rights-of-way will see their job safety greatly enhanced, thanks to a host of proposals that will form the basis of new federal regulations.

A 25-member Safety Standards Federal Negotiating Advisory Committee made up of labor, industry and government officials reached consensus on 11 specific and nine general recommendations that will lay the foundation of the Federal Railroad Administration's first-ever negotiated rulemaking. The process is intended to smooth and expedite final implementation of new regulations.

"The result will be the difference between life and death for roadway workers in the field," said Federal Railroad Administrator Jolene Molitoris.

"This is an agreement based on trust," she said. "It shows how government, labor and management can achieve positive results. We have taken a quantum leap to change our traditional relationships."

"This process shows what can be achieved when rail labor and management and the federal government join together in good faith to improve safety on our nation's railroads," added Railway Signalmen President Dan Pickett, whose union was joined by the Locomotive Engineers, Maintenance of Way Employees and Transportation Workers in helping develop the proposals.

The initiatives include dictating when workers can be on tracks, establishing when a watchman is needed, requiring the use of train whistles when approaching work areas and calling for safety training programs and daily track crew briefings.

"I am confident that this agreement will create uniform federal regulations that protect our nation's railroad workers," Pickett said. "Finally we have some concrete recommendations to help bring about tough, effective safety measures that will help end . . . tragic deaths and injuries."

Signalmen file charges

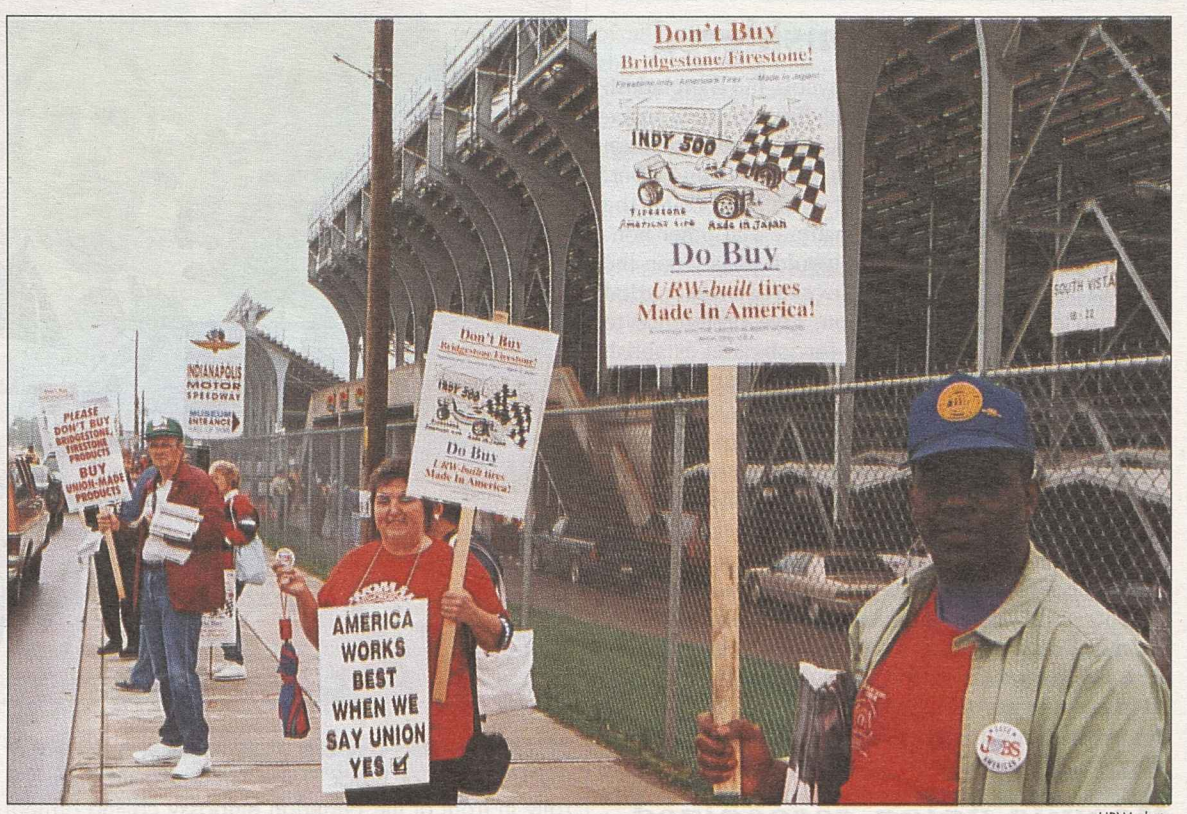
In another development, the Signalmen have charged Safetran Systems Corp., a leading signal equipment manufacturer, with failing to bargain in good faith.

In its filing with the National Labor Relations Board, BRS indicated that Safetran, which is owned by British Tire and Rubber Corp., turned down numerous requests to meet with Local 234's bargaining committee, and refused to bargain over economic issues until just prior to the contract's expiration.

Signalmen began picketing the Louisville, Ky., plant May 2, and management has stationed a photographer and video equipment to record strike activities, actions BRS contends are intended to intimidate its 67 hourly-rated workers.

"Our members have worked hard in Louisville to help make this company a leader among railroad signal equipment suppliers," Pickett said. "They have repeatedly settled for meager wage increases. Their bargaining demands are in no way unreasonable."

"Our union negotiators remain ready to work diligently to bring the dispute to a fair and equitable settlement," he said.



URW photo

Rubber Workers and Steelworkers protest Bridgestone/Firestone tactics at Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

URW alters Bridgestone course

By James B. Parks

Some 500 trade unionists put out the caution flag at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway about Bridgestone/Firestone's union-busting tactics.

The Rubber Workers' demonstration came after the union suspended its strike against the giant Japanese tire manufacturer May 22 and switched strategies in its effort for a new contract.

"While our members have offered to return to work unconditionally, they are by no means surrendering unconditionally to the brutal tactics of this company," URW President Kenneth L. Coss said. "They want and deserve a fair and honorable contract and a return to their jobs. That is the only way this dispute will be resolved."

Some 4,200 URW members in five states walked out July 12, 1994, almost three months after their contract had expired. The strike was the longest in tire industry history.

The informational protest, held on "Carburetion Day" for the Indianapolis 500, drew strong support from the Steelworkers and the Indiana AFL-CIO. The workers focused attention on Bridgestone/Firestone's so-called "America's Tire" campaign theme since it returned to auto racing sponsorship.

The company is using Japanese-made tires in the Indy 500 and other races, a practice the unions called a "deceitful marketing practice," given the company's disregard for workplace rights in the United States.

Bridgestone/Firestone hired 2,300 permanent replacements for the striking workers. The URW's offer to return to work means the company "can no longer hire off the street," said John Sellers, URW's organizing director and Bridgestone/Firestone negotiations coordinator.

The union wants all its members returned to work, Sellers said, and will continue to negotiate with the company in hopes of reaching a "fair and equitable settlement."

Bridgestone/Firestone is one of the companies that could stand to lose millions in federal contracts under President Clinton's recent executive order banning deals with companies that use permanent replacements for strikers.

Under the order, federal contractors who hire permanent replacements could have their contracts terminated and be barred from future contracts or contract renewal until the labor dispute is resolved and the jobs of striking workers restored.

Despite a court challenge to the order, filed by business groups and Bridgestone/Firestone, the Labor Department is moving ahead with plans to implement regulations for enforcing the order. The new rules were published in the May 25 Federal Register and will become effective June 26.

While negotiations continue, the URW is developing other programs to achieve its goals, Sellers said. A worldwide and AFL-CIO boycott will continue and other corporate campaigns are being devised, he added. The union also is moving ahead with plans to strengthen its efforts through merger with the USWA.

The URW and USWA announced a proposed merger agreement pending final approval by the URW at a special convention June 30 in Pittsburgh. If adopted, the URW would become a part of the USWA but would be the core of a newly created Rubber and Plastic Conference of the union. The URW offices in Akron, Ohio, would headquarter the conference.

The strike began after workers refused to accept the deep concessions demanded by management, including reduced health care coverage and continuous plant operations.

Bridgestone/Firestone flatly rejected the idea of pattern bargaining, even though the other two Big Three tire makers, Goodyear and Michelin-owned Uniroyal Goodrich, signed pattern agreements that increase wages and benefits about 16 percent over three years.

Instead, Bridgestone/Firestone's final offer cut wages and health insurance benefits, froze pensions, and instituted around-the-clock production schedules. These terms, Coss said, typified the desire of foreign tiremakers to take unfair advantage of U.S. workers.

Flight Attendants give big push to USAir rescue efforts

Union efforts to rescue USAir neared a final approach May 20 when the Flight Attendants reached a tentative agreement with the ailing carrier.

In exchange for a 4.95 percent wage cut, loss of a future 4 percent raise, certain benefits and work rules changes, 8,300 AFA members would gain preferred stock, a 20 percent equity stake in profit sharing and stock options, and a seat on the board of directors.

AFA's Master Executive Council is urging members to approve the pact, a process expected to begin in July.

Negotiations are under way on a final agreement, involving some 270 dispatchers and training specialists represented by the Transport Workers, for USAir to reach its goal of reducing its labor costs by $500 million a year. Earlier agreements have been reached with the Air Line Pilots and the Machinists, and all are subject to ratification by the respective memberships.

NATCA in safety plea

Meanwhile, the Air Traffic Controllers said antiquated equipment and understaffing pose new risks for air travelers. A May 17 equipment failure at Chicago's Air Route Traffic Control Center, tying up the city's airspace during the morning rush, "was just another of many recent breakdowns across the country that threaten the safety and efficiency of the skies," said NATCA President Barry Krasner.

"As old vacuum-tube-era equipment fails with no warning, our overworked and understaffed controller work force is stretched beyond the limit, scrambling to keep a multitude of aircraft safely separated," he said. "All the while these incidents occur, air traffic continues to steadily increase."

NATCA has warned of moves in Washington to change controllers' retirement, cut their pay and privatize the air traffic control system, "pitting safety against bottom-line pressures to cut costs."

BARGAINING

Carhaul talks resume

Talks between the Teamsters and 17 carhaul companies resumed May 30 in an effort to avoid a strike that could cripple the delivery of most of the nation's new automobiles to dealer showrooms.

The contract covering some 12,000 workers in 37 states expired May 21, the same day the IBT members voted overwhelmingly to authorize a strike if no progress is made in the talks. IBT President Ron Carey said talks will continue only if there is real progress, but cautioned that a strike might be necessary to win a good contract.

Carhaul companies have enjoyed several years of record earnings and rising productivity, the union said. Some carhaul executives have received dramatic salary increases, while companies are cutting employees' health care benefits, retirement pay and job security.

Cat charges dismissed

The UAW will appeal an administrative law judge's decision to dismiss several unfair labor practice charges against Caterpillar Inc., including a charge the company illegally fired an employee active in the UAW in-plant campaign.

Judge James Rose found the union's in-plant "work-to-rule" strategy, aimed at pressuring the company to sign a fair contract, is not protected activity under federal labor laws.

Rose ruled that the company did not violate labor law when it fired George Boze, a UAW committeeman at Caterpillar's Mossville, Ill., plant. Boze, according to the judge, exceeded the "permissible bounds of impulsive behavior" when he threatened a foreman after an altercation.

"This decision flies in the face of the facts and the law," said UAW Secretary-Treasurer Bill Casstevens.

AFSCME in hospital pact

Two AFSCME locals signed a new three-year contract with MetroHealth System of Cleveland that increases wages for 2,040 workers by at least 5 percent.

The agreement, ratified May 16 by Locals 3353 and 3360, freezes wages in the first year, then raises them by 2 percent in 1996 and by 3 percent in 1997.

The contract also establishes a new wage and pay structure, effective next year, and enhances seniority rights. Some employees whose job classifications will change may receive two raises next year, the union said.

Employees covered by the new contract include social workers, licensed practical nurses, technicians, service employees and members of the support, maintenance and clerical staffs.

Construction pact sealed

A year before the current contract expires, the Carpenters approved a new two-year agreement with the Residential Construction Employers of Chicago and Northern Illinois.

Under the new agreement, residential carpenters will receive an annual wage increase of $1 per hour. The month of June has been added to the Saturday make-up day provision, which is used for days lost to inclement weather or unforeseen problems. The new contract expires June 30, 1998, replacing one that expires in June 1996.

"Forging a long-term agreement on wages allows our members to plan for their families' future, provides our employers with predictable costs and gives us a competitive edge," said Earl Oliver, president of the Carpenters' council.

Health care unit gains

Some 1,200 Teamsters approved a new three-year contract with Health Care Service Corp., formerly Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois, that provides wage increases and lump-sum payments.

Under the agreement, workers represented by IBT Local 743 at three Health Care offices in the Chicago area will receive a 3.5 percent lump sum cash payment retroactive to April 26. In the second year, they will receive a 2.5 percent payment and a 1 percent wage increase with a 2.75 percent payment and another 1 percent wage increase in the third year.

The contract also increases the vision care reimbursement, but raises the amount employees must pay for health care beginning in the third year.

ESOP rescue pays dividends

Workers sell Textileather after creating jobs, profit

By James B. Parks

After engineering a stunning five-year turnaround, the 300 employee owners of Textileather Corp. sold the company to Canadian General Tower at a substantial profit.

"Our members paid the price of concessions and took the risk, and now they are reaping their just rewards," said Clothing and Textile Workers Vice President Noel Beasley. "The employee buyout saved jobs and enabled us to turn the company around. We look forward to a great relationship with Canadian General Tower."

Terms of the March 31 sale were not disclosed. A statement by American Capital Strategies, the investment bank that handled the original buyout, said Canadian General Tower will pay workers who have been with the company since the 1990 buyout "a substantial premium over the appraised value for their stock."

The sale also will provide funds for new capital expenditures in the Toledo, Ohio, facility, enabling the plant to expand its product line from automotive vinyl to include graphic arts and pool liners.

Employees also agreed to a new three-year contract with Canadian General Tower that includes an immediate 10 percent raise and cost-of-living increases in the last two years.

When employees bought out the former Toledo Automotive Vinyl Division of GenCorp in June 1990, the plant had no viable buyers, complex environmental and regulatory problems, poor market prospects, and problems with productivity and quality, said ACS Vice President Adam Blumenthal.

The company was demanding that workers accept severe concessions or face the loss of their jobs, Beasley said. Rather than accept the cuts, the workers chose to try an ESOP. With the help of ACS and financing help from the state of Ohio and Congress Financial, the plant was bought out by the local union, along with management and salaried employees. The local union gained three members of the board of directors and the international union had one.

In five years, productivity skyrocketed in every department, scrap declined from 13 percent to 3 percent and quarterly profit-sharing payments to employees completely offset concessions. The workers gave up about $1.80 an hour in wages and benefits to make the ESOP work, Beasley said. Over the five years, "they recouped that plus," he said.

The keys to the success of the buyout, Beasley said, were the viability of the company, worker education and a good relationship between workers and management.

Although the company was potentially successful, it was "being plundered by the parent company. Once we got the corporate parent off its back, it was on the way," he said. Often, employees don't consider ESOPs until it is too late to save the company. "They make the mistake of trying to salvage the Titanic after it's hit an iceberg. By then it's too late."

Workers had to be educated on the benefits of the ESOP, Beasley said, particularly about what they already had invested in the company and how they could make more money by "working smarter and working for themselves."

The historic good relationship between the union and company management made it easier for the ESOP to work, since they jointly were able to solve problems as they arose, Beasley said.

Beasley also praised ACTWU President Jack Sheinkman for his aid and personal involvement in the beginning of the ESOP. "Without it, this would never have happened."



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

CWA President Martin Bahr discusses strategy with union negotiators during a break in the AT&T talks.

AT&T workers put off strike for talks

Continued from Page 1

retired workers," said Ed Keller, president of the IBEW's council of local unions.

"They are cutting away at our union job base, racking up big profits and at the same time they are trying to pick the pockets of retirees," Miller said.

"We said at the beginning of these talks, and we say again, that we are only seeking for retirees a measure of security that they have earned and which, according to AT&T's own financial reports, the company can well afford," said Bill Davis, director of IBEW's telecommunications department.

Some 17,000 union jobs — 11,000 from CWA and 6,000 from IBEW — have been eliminated at AT&T since the last round of bargaining three years ago, as the company downsized and added new technology to boost its profits.

At the same time, it created new non-union subsidiaries where it has resisted organizing efforts. "Our members are losing jobs, but they can't get jobs at the other companies and we have to address that," Miller said. The unions want AT&T to remain neutral in union organizing drives.

A key issue for the IBEW is subcontracting, said union spokesman Jim Spellane. Most AT&T manufacturing workers are represented by the IBEW, so contracting out directly threatens the jobs of bargaining unit members, he said.

A strike may not be the unions' first option if talks break down, Miller said. "I think we would adopt a strategy of applying pressure, in kind of an escalating fashion, through various protests, like job actions in the workplace or informational picketing."

CWA represents about 90,000 AT&T workers and the IBEW 20,000. Following the conclusion of negotiations of the national agreement, the IBEW and CWA locals representing manufacturing workers must hammer out a supplemental agreement covering specific issues in their sector. The current supplemental agreements expire June 3.

Other telecommunications negotiations mirror the issues in the AT&T talks. IBEW reached a tentative five-year pact with Bell Atlantic covering 9,500 employees in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

The pact calls for wage increases totaling 14.5 percent over the term and for expanded medical benefits. For the first time, however, workers who retired after 1989 would have to pay part of their health care premiums. The previous contract expires Aug. 5.

Contract talks with CWA, which represents 37,000 Bell Atlantic employees in six states and the District of Columbia, begin June 13.

Workers given more time to file WARN lawsuits

The U.S. Supreme Court unanimously relaxed the deadlines for workers who want to sue their companies for failing to give adequate advance notice of plant closings and mass layoffs.

The high court said the deadlines for filing such lawsuits are the same as those provided for in the most similar state law.

"The court has come down on the side of workers against unscrupulous employers trying to avoid their legal and moral responsibilities," said Steelworkers Vice President Leon Lynch. "With this ruling, employers will think twice before failing to give notice before closing a plant."

The decisions in North Star Steel vs. Thomas and Crown Cork vs. Steelworkers will benefit both union and non-union workers, Lynch said.

"As with so many other initiatives undertaken by labor unions," he said, " the result of this ruling is that all workers can be assured they will have sufficient time to bring suit to redress violations of the plant closing notice law."

The cases arose from mass layoffs at North Star and Crown Cork. Employees at both plants, including 100 USWA members at Crown Cork and salaried non-union workers at North Star, allege they were laid off without receiving the 60 days' notice required under the federal Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act.

In light of the decision, the USWA plans to seek damage payments for the Crown Cork members, Lynch said. The USWA won a separate $1.5 million judgment on behalf of 250 of its members at North Star who were laid off without adequate notice.

The employers claimed since the WARN Act did not contain a time limit for filing suits, the six-month limit in the National Labor Relations Act applied, effectively killing the suits.

The 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that although there is overlap in the two laws, the purposes are different and the state statute of limitations should govern WARN Act cases.

Writing for the court, Justice David H. Souter said the state deadline law applies and that borrowing deadlines from other federal laws is the exception and is reserved for those cases in which applying deadlines borrowed from similar state laws would frustrate justice.

— James B. Parks

COURTS

Comp time limits scuttled

The Supreme Court refused to let Missouri prison officials tell guards when to use some of the compensatory time off they earn by working overtime.

The court let stand lower court rulings in Schirro vs. Heaton that the state's forced-use policy violates the Fair Labor Standards Act. The law generally requires employers to pay overtime at time-and-a-half for work exceeding 40 hours in a week.

Congress amended the law in 1985 to let state and local governments pay for overtime in compensatory time off rather than cash. In Missouri, prison guards are reimbursed with 1.5 hours of comp time for every hour of overtime. The guards are allowed to bank up to 480 hours of comp time, after which they must receive overtime pay in cash.

In an attempt to lower comp time, Missouri prison officials required guards with 100 or more hours of banked comp time to submit requests for using at least 40 hours of it. If no request is received, the policy allowed the officials to schedule the time off — even if the guards objected.

Diamond suit illegal

Diamond Walnut Growers violated federal labor law when it filed a lawsuit against striking Teamsters, an appeals court ruled. The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld a decision by the National Labor Relations Board that the suit was an unfair labor practice.

The company sued IBT Local 601 and the California School Employees Association after some 500 IBT members walked out in 1991 rather than accept severe cutbacks in pay and benefits. The mostly Hispanic, female strikers have been "permanently replaced."

The CSEA wrote a letter to the company's major customers announcing a boycott because Diamond "refuses to negotiate" with the IBT.

The NLRB ruled that by filing the "baseless" libel suit, Diamond Walnut was retaliating against the strikers. The case is Diamond Walnut vs. NLRB.

Agency fees upheld

AFSCME must refund portions of agency fees paid by non-member Pennsylvania state employees under a settlement that upholds the principle of the fees.

"The settlement again reaffirms the American ideal long promoted by labor unions that all persons who benefit from union representation should pay their fair share fee for that representation," said Edward J. Keller, director of AFSCME Council 13.

The settlement, approved by a federal court, reduces the "fair share" fees that non-members were assessed from Aug. 16, 1988, through Dec. 31, 1994. The court ruled in 1990 that agency fees were constitutional, but threw out Council 13's formula for calculating the assessments.

The court also overturned Pennsylvania's law requiring non-members with complaints about agency fees to seek redress through union remedies concluding with binding arbitration.



American Institute for Free Labor Development photo

Elena Carr, director of the Substance Abuse Institute, addresses a conference on drug abuse in Brazil.

Institute helps refine union drug fight

By Muriel H. Cooper

A new Substance Abuse Institute is looking for committed union volunteers who want to help brothers and sisters fight alcohol and drug abuse.

The institute, housed at the George Meany Center for Labor Studies, works in cooperation with the AFL-CIO Department of Community Services and is funded by a Labor Department grant. Its charge is to increase awareness among unionists about problems and solutions for workers suffering from substance abuse.

Unions traditionally have been at the forefront in the battle against substance abuse, helping to develop Employee Assistance Programs through collective bargaining. The institute hopes to build on that experience, using a train-the-trainer approach, to develop a network of resources on the issue.

"We want to pull together all of the loose ends to help unions that are looking at Employee Assistance and Member Assistance Programs," said Institute Director Elena Carr. "We want to serve as a clearinghouse where unions can get information, technical assistance and training, as well as help unions looking to develop assistance programs.

"We also are concerned about protecting worker rights and uniting to help our members, which is the traditional role of labor unions," she said.

Current EAPs and MAPs differ depending on how various unions have developed them, Carr said. Flight Attendants, for example, historically work a variety of schedules in multiple job sites with a minimum of supervision. Typically they end up working and socializing with other crew members, leaving supervisors unaware of any potential problems.

The AFA has solved this problem using a MAP. Employees working together best know when there is a problem, Carr said. They don't diagnose, but are trained to intervene and assist members in finding the proper resources.

"There is a progression to this disease," said Carr. "There may be a worker who parties too much and may have a problem getting in to work. At first you may not pay it any attention, but if it keeps progressing, the person may be on a route of no return."

The Laborers have developed MAPs that are funded through negotiated health and welfare funds, and now have about 10 programs covering 50,000 members and their families.

"We put an emphasis on early intervention," said Kitty Conlan, director of LIUNA's health promotion. "We also think there are different ways to handle substance abuse problems besides putting someone in a hospital." The LIUNA program is structured to provide assistance during the seasonal work cycle of union members.

A 1992 report showed that LIUNA's health and welfare funds netted more than $1 million in savings on health care claims after instituting the MAPs.

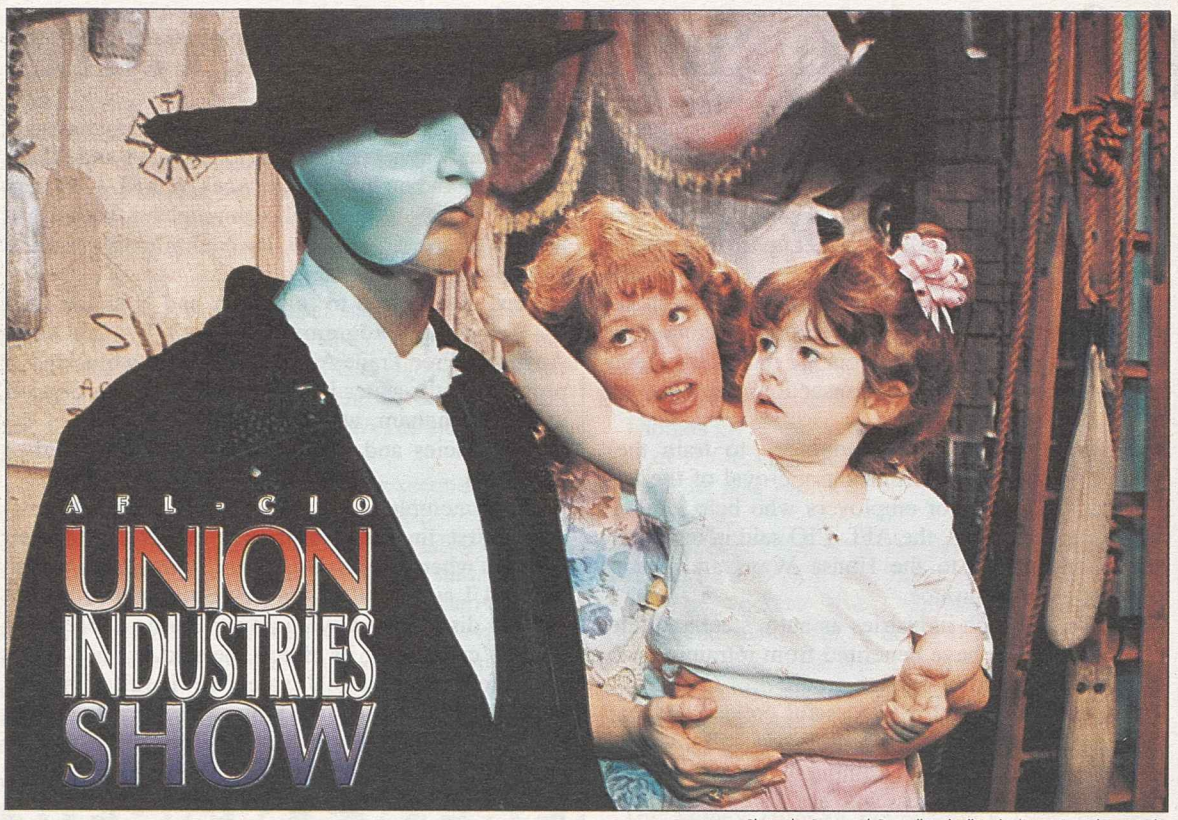
The potential for containing health care costs, as well as improving worker morale and productivity, makes substance abuse programs an important element in collective bargaining, Carr said, with both unions and management having an important stake in their development.

Assistance programs also are a selling point in organizing workers, she added. "These types of programs attract workers to unions, especially if they are negotiated benefits. People know these programs can help them and their families."

"Substance abuse in the workplace exacts a heavy financial burden on American businesses and an equally heavy emotional toll on the family, co-workers and friends of workers with drug problems," said Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich, whose agency provided $500,000 funding for the first year of a three-year project. The remaining $1 million in funding is subject to budget approval.

"Ultimately, this union movement to increase effective workplace-based substance abuse prevention and treatment programs may prove key in reversing the national trend toward substance abuse," said Ted Mapes of Transport Workers Local 100, the labor director of the Employee Assistance Professionals Association.

For additional information, call Carr at 301/431-1672.



Photos by Raymond Crowell and Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Showtime



in the

Motor City

From the Phantom displayed by the Theatrical Stage Employees to the Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers' icing on the motorcar, the Union Industries Show provided pleasure and treasure for the 300,000 people who attended the four-day event in Detroit.

It was the largest crowd to see the AFL-CIO extravaganza in the 50 years since it began in Cincinnati, said Charles Mercer, secretary-treasurer of the Union Label and Service Trades Department.

Detroiters discovered the range of union craftsmanship, from the centuries-old art of glassblowing to the newfangled technology that allows union technicians to produce 100,000 bottles in a single shift.

Union workers representing more than 300 exhibitors not only demonstrated their skills, but gave away samples of their wares — from popcorn to automobiles. Four autos, two Harley-Davidson motorcycles, a pick-up truck and thousands of other give-aways cheered the crowd.

Many exhibitors also explained how union workers "Stand UP" for America's working families, protecting the benefits and worker protections that the labor movement has helped to secure.

The 51st edition of the show moves on next year to Las Vegas.











Innovation was the word of the day at the Union Industries Show in Detroit. The AFT displayed its computerized youth program (above), while Sew What Inc. showed how computer technology could be used to embroider 15 items at a time (above left). The Laborers were fitted for hazardous waste cleanup (far left), while continuous entertainment (left) was provided on two stages, a new feature for the 50th show.

Labor stands up for job training, UI programs

By David Kameras

The AFL-CIO has denounced plans by the Republican majority in Congress to slash job training and unemployment assistance.

In testimony before several congressional committees, labor representatives defended the variety of programs that have assisted workers who have been unemployed or displaced by trade policies.

The latest attack on job training programs came May 24, when the House Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee approved a bill to consolidate most training, adult literacy and vocational rehabilitation programs into four block grants, while cutting funding in a number of areas.

The proposed cuts came on the heels of a Census Bureau report showing that productivity gains are linked to increasing education levels, prompting Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich to proclaim that the Republican priorities are wrong-headed and potentially dangerous.

The study found that increasing education by 10 percent, or just over a year of schooling, results in an 8.6 percent increase in output. "The effect rises to 11 percent for the non-manufacturing sector — nearly three times the boost for a similar increase in capital stock," said the report, "The Other Shoe: Education's Contribution to the Productivity of Establishments."

"These are very, very dramatic results," Reich said. "What they show is the utter folly of the Republican budget proposals, which would cut education and training in hopes of boosting somewhat the incentives to invest in physical capital. What this shows clearly is that human capital is the nation's most precious asset. The Republicans have got their productivity calculus exactly backward."

The report contradicts a prevalent perception of employers, who according to an earlier study have little confidence in the nation's learning institutions — a "fundamental disconnect," according to the University of Pennsylvania's Robert Zemsky, who helped design the survey.

"The message that emerges from our research is a simple one: what is required to end the disconnection between schools and employers are more direct, substantive and businesslike transactions between the two," Zemsky said.

Employers should be encouraged to train their workers through the permanent approval of the federal tax deduction for employers who help workers with education costs, the AFL-CIO said in testimony submitted May 9 to the House Ways and Means oversight subcommittee.

Workers in such industries as auto, steel and telecommunications have benefited from retraining programs encouraged by the tax credit.

"Despite these highly successful collectively bargained programs, most U.S. employers still invest far too little in education and training of their work force, particularly those workers who are not college graduates," the federation said, while calling the tax credit "a small price to pay for encouraging and enabling workers" toward furthering their skills.

"The Treasury recoups the public's investment many times over in higher tax revenues" as workers move up into better-paying jobs, the AFL-CIO added.

Also testifying were Arthur A. Coia, president of the Laborers, and Gerald Mann, chief counsel of AFSCME District Council 37, who asked for restoration of the tax deduction for prepaid legal services plans, calling its demise in 1992 "a tax increase on middle-class Americans."

The importance of trade adjustment assistance was addressed May 19 before the House Ways and Means subcommittee on human resources by AFL-CIO Legislative Representative Bill Cunningham, who urged the government to renew its commitment to assist unemployed workers.

Republican plans to fold TAA and NAFTA-TAA — a separate program established by the North American Free Trade Agreement — into a block grant program to the states likely would spell their demise, said Cunningham, who argued that a number of existing policies and programs should be retained or expanded.

"The unemployment insurance system is the nation's first line of defense for workers and their families when job loss hits them," Cunningham said.

The UI system also is a key economic stabilizer, quickly dispensing buying power during a recession, thereby cushioning its effects, he said.

"Unfortunately, the UI safety net is full of holes," he said. Three out of five jobless workers do not get UI, while those who do get only one-third of their previous earnings and one out of three exhaust their benefits before finding a job. "Lack of adequate funding is the biggest single factor behind excessive restrictions on eligibility and inadequate UI payments," he said.

Benefits should be at least 50 percent of a worker's previous earnings, up to a maximum of two-thirds of the state's average weekly wage, and harsh and excessive eligibility and disqualification provisions should be eliminated, Cunningham said.

Further, "a revitalized Job Service can help shorten spells of unemployment and thus relieve the cost burden to employers and minimize long-term job loss of many workers," he said.

Good-paying jobs major component of states' success

A new report again discredits the notion among corporate executives that the grass is greener where the wages are low and services are cheap.

In fact, the lower the wage and the cheaper the services, the poorer the business climate.

The annual "Development Report Card for the States," prepared by the Corporation for Enterprise Development, surveys a number of factors — including business vitality, development capacity and the local tax and fiscal system — that define each state's promise for future business development.

U.S. businesses tend to take a short-sighted approach to assessing their costs, seeking out locations with low wages and low taxes without focusing on the long-term costs, AFL-CIO economist Frank Parente pointed out.

"You can't have good economic development without a good education system, without a good transportation infrastructure, without adequate public services," Parente said.

"Companies should look for places that have these features," he said. "But these things aren't cheap."

The report points out that the tax issue "is not simply low or no taxes. State and local leaders, along with businesses, often approach taxes from a very narrow perspective, focusing only on the immediate, cost side of the tax equation. But quality public services, such as education and infrastructure, though costly, are critical for business success."

The study pointed to the Northeast, which "with a large number of revenue-starved urban areas, yet few mechanisms to compensate for local tax differentials, . . . has been losing ground faster than any other region on development capacity."

"Yet looking closer at the measures, it becomes apparent that this drop in ranking was caused almost exclusively by a drop in physical infrastructure, in particular the quality of the region's bridges and highways, and the affordability of its urban housing," the report said.

It has become an accepted part of the corporate mantra that businesses should look to the low-wage, anti-tax South to improve their prospects. Yet the Report Card's regional findings throw that assumption into doubt.

For example, "the South still has a long way to go — economic performance and development capacity rankings remain the worst in the country, as they have for the last decade. In particular, job quality in the South is alarmingly low, as measured by average pay, annual pay growth and health insurance coverage. Interestingly, even omitting pay levels from the grade calculation . . . does little to change the South's poor earnings and job quality rankings."

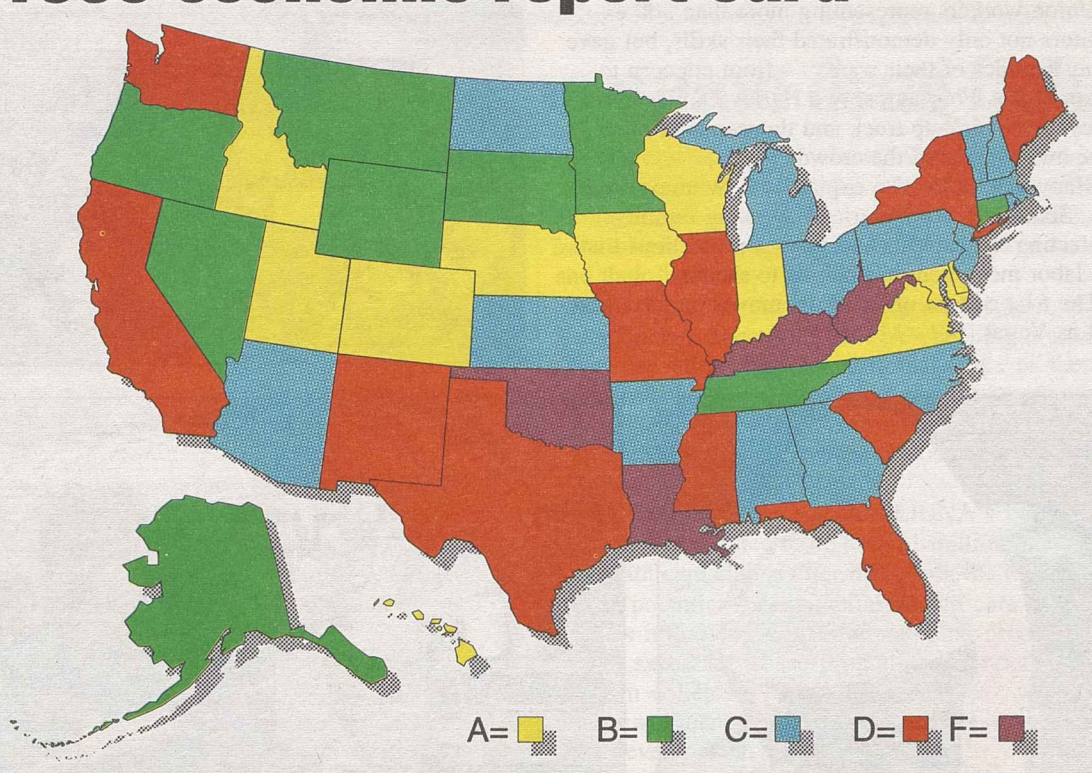
The report also indicated that poverty remains a problem, with nine of the 11 worst-ranking states in the southern region. In addition, "the southern Plains are sputtering, with large disparities between rich and poor, sub-par employment and declining performance."

Colorado for the third straight year outperformed all other states, recording straight As. Four other states made the Report Card's "Honor Roll" (those receiving straight As and Bs in the study's three indices): Idaho, Minnesota, Montana and Oregon.

The Report Card, intended as an alternative to the widely used Grant Thornton Manufacturing Index, "shows how healthy a state's economy actually is, not how hard everyone has worked at improving it. Thus, the Report Card measures an increase in employment, not the number of business recruitment offices in a state; it measures the increase in new businesses and not new tax incentives being offered; and it measures the education of the work force, not the availability and quality of training."

— David Kameras

1995 economic report card



The economic performance index, one of three gauges used by the Corporation for Enterprise Development, measures how many economic benefits and growth opportunities a state economy provides its populace.

Labor is 'Prospering' on radio in New York

By Colleen M. O'Neill

Western New York trade unionists are spreading the fruits of their labor.

Countering the right-wing, anti-worker talk radio overtaking the nation's airwaves, "Prospering in America" offers a refreshing perspective to listeners in Albany, Buffalo — and soon, the show's producers hope, the entire state, including New York City.

"'Prospering in America' will allow organized labor to lay the groundwork today for a future in which labor becomes a part of the mainstream of radio talk show issues," said Edward J. Cleary, president of the New York State AFL-CIO. "This is an opportunity to enhance the public awareness and perception of the numerous goals, issues and initiatives of the organized labor movement of this state."

The program, which celebrated its second anniversary May 23, gives labor "a vehicle at its disposal to compete with many, if not all, of the labor-bashing talk shows currently on the air," Cleary said.

Sponsors of the weekly, hourlong program include the state federation, Amalgamated Bank, Civil Service Employees Association/AFSCME Local 1000, Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations' Western Region Office, Group Health Inc., Operating Engineers Local 17, Paperworkers Region II, Public Employees Federation (AFT/SEIU), Sheet Metal Workers Local 28, Steelworkers District 14 and Local 593 and UAW Region 9.

"Prospering in America" adds to a wave of successful local labor radio talk shows that have sprung up over the past 10 years. Labor's point of view is now airing on numerous shows in Arkansas, California, the District of Columbia, Illinois, Maryland, Missouri, Nevada, Ohio and Wisconsin.

The show has its roots in years of discussion and ultimately a push by IUOE Local 17, UAW Region 9, USWA Local 593, the Buffalo Building and Construction Trades Council and Cornell to get on the air in 1993. The state AFL-CIO signed on last year.

Thomas G. Hopkins, business manager and president of IUOE Local 17, helped get the show off the ground; he also serves as co-host with Alex Blair of Cornell.

"Our concern has been to address key issues and provide answers that will make a difference in the quality of workers' lives," Hopkins said. "I think we've been successful in doing that. In these tough economic times, there was a need for such a program that intelligently tackled what really matters most to Americans and their families.

"We get good guests, look at the issues of the day from a pro-worker standpoint, and we get good response," he said. "It makes our members feel good when they hear the truth come out about some of these issues," information lacking elsewhere across the radio band. "Folks get involved when they understand the issues."

The show includes a labor-oriented news report, a feature that looks back at memorable moments in labor history, and the commentary of former Texas Agriculture Secretary Jim Hightower.

Guests have ranged from UAW officials discussing American trade policy with Japan to former Flight Attendants President Susan Bianchi-Sand discussing pay equity goals and progress.

In addition, former USWA President Lynn Williams, UAW President Owen Bieber, Office and Professional Employees President Michael Goodwin, Farm Workers President Arturo Rodriguez, Doug Allen of the NFL Players Association and the Rev. Jesse L. Jackson all have been guests of the program.

Shows have focused on health care coverage, job security, sexual harassment, stress in the workplace, international labor, enforcement of prevailing wage rates, executive compensation and the potential ramifications of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

NEWSMAKERS

After nearly six months with only two members, the National Mediation Board has a full roster as **Kenneth B. Hipp** was sworn in during a private ceremony. Hipp, a Honolulu labor lawyer, fills the board's Republican seat, replacing **Patrick J. Cleary**, whose term expired July 1, 1994.

Barbara Silverstein has resigned her position as special assistant for ergonomics for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Silverstein, who was hired to work on an ergonomics standard, said she was "personally frustrated" by Congress' intent to weaken the agency's rule-making. She previously served as research director for the Washington state safety and health assessment program.

President Clinton and a host of senior administration officials pledged to fight Republican attacks on initiatives important to working women. "We all have a role to play in making the workplace better for women," said **Karen Nussbaum**, director of the Labor Department women's bureau, who led a two-day conference to celebrate the bureau's 75th anniversary. The conference brought together women from across the country to discuss working women's needs and map out ways to implement bureau recommendations.

Michael Goodwin, president of the Office and Professional Employees, replaced **Alfred Di Tolla** as president of the American Labor Museum/Botto House National Landmark in New Jersey. Di Tolla, former president of the Theatrical Stage Employees, died in December.

Father's Day, June 18, will mark the ninth annual **Dollars Against Diabetes** campaign by the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department. The campaign raises funds for the Diabetes Research Institute, a non-profit organization that is one of the world's most comprehensive diabetes research facilities. For information, call 1-800-804DADS.

AWARDS

Two unions, a city housing director and three lenders received the AFL-CIO Investment Trusts' National Housing Partners Award. The Carpenters and Painters were honored, along with the Asian Community Development Corp. of Boston, the Federal National Mortgage Association, **Ron Gatton**, president of the Redevelopment Services Corp., and **Alex Sanchez**, director of housing for San Jose, Calif. The awards are given to individuals and organizations who help preserve affordable housing.

The Sidney Hillman Foundation's 1994 Hillman Award winners for journalism and public policy are: **James Traub** for "City on a Hill: Testing the American Dream at City College"; **Aaron Bernstein** for "Inequality" and "Why America Needs Unions" in Business Week; **Jim Morris** for "Worked to Death" in the Houston Chronicle; **Andrew Tkach** for "Of Human Bondage: Slavery Today," a news segment on ABC's Turning Point. The Officer's Award was given to **Scott Simon**, a reporter for National Public Radio's Weekend Edition, for a segment titled "Sing It Like You Mean It." The Officer's Award for Lifetime Public Service was given to **Murray Kempton**, a regular columnist and contributor to New York Newsday. The awards, which honor journalism and public policy that investigate issues related to social justice, are given in memory of **Sidney Hillman**, the first president of the Clothing Workers.

Phoenix Letter Carrier **Richard E. Lemaster** was honored posthumously as National Hero of the Year by the NALC. Lemaster saved his niece from a mobile home fire but lost his life trying to rescue two other relatives. NALC President **Vincent Sombrotto** presented the award to his widow, **Margie Lemaster.** The union also presented the National Humanitarian of the Year award to **Kathleen Napolitano,** who helps needy customers along her route in a disadvantaged section of Rochester, N.H. Other honorees included **Matthew T. Neal, Daniel S. Mohan, Martin Jiminez** and Branch 181 of Austin, Texas.

Howard Darter, a member of Communications Workers Local 9510, received the Samuel Gompers American Red Cross National Labor Award.

DEATH

Ellis T. Baker III, former director of administrative operations for The Newspaper Guild, died of cancer May 29 at the Washington Hospice.

Baker worked as a reporter and editor at the Baltimore Sun during the 1940s, when he also helped organize for the Guild in the South. Joining the Guild staff in 1953, he was editor of the union's newspaper, the Guild Reporter, and retired 10 years ago as director of administrative operations.

Baker, who lived in Washington, was born in New Haven, Conn., and graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Duke University.

Survivors include his wife of 49 years, Margaret Baker of Washington; four children, Michael Baker, Peter Baker, Molly Arrington and Ellis T. Baker IV; and five grandchildren.

RESOURCES

TELEVISION

The Uprising of '34, chronicling the 1934 General Textile strike, will be shown on Public Broadcasting System stations June 27 at 10 p.m. (Check your local listings). The strike, initiated by southern cotton mill workers, eventually involved 500,000 textile workers throughout the eastern United States. The story is told through the voices of people in mill communities.

CONFERENCE

The Second National **Conference on Ergonomics, Safety and Health in Construction** will be held June 18-21 at the Sheraton Washington Hotel on the theme of building a safety culture. The conference, co-sponsored by the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, and several cabinet departments, will feature Vice President Gore as the keynote speaker. Contact BCTD at 202/347-1461.

UNION NEWS

AFL-CIO on the Internet

The AFL-CIO introduced LaborWEB, the federation's new "home page" on the Internet's World Wide Web. Through this new web site, information from the AFL-CIO is now available to any of the Internet's 30 million computer users worldwide.

LaborWEB enables anyone with a computer, modem and access to the World Wide Web to connect with the AFL-CIO "home page" and receive the federation's latest press releases, policy statements, boycott lists and a variety of other information.

The "home page" also includes links to other labor-related web sites. In addition, LaborWEB has a section devoted to the AFL-CIO Organizing Institute and its training programs for union organizers.

The URL address for the new site is http://www.afl-cio.org/

Social Security service tops

Workers at the Social Security Administration achieved the top ranking in a recent survey comparing the quality of service provided by public- and private-sector firms.

The study — "World-Class Benchmarks," performed by Dalbar, Inc. — rated employees according to how much time it took to answer a call, their attitude and professionalism and whether the employee had enough information to answer all questions.

"This confirms what we've known for years," said Government Employees President John Sturdivant, whose union represents some 53,000 Social Security employees. "In the midst of pervasive anti-government rhetoric, the truth is that government employees get the job done efficiently and effectively."

Most oppose private USPS

Most Americans reject proposals for privatizing the U.S. Postal Service, according to a recent national survey.

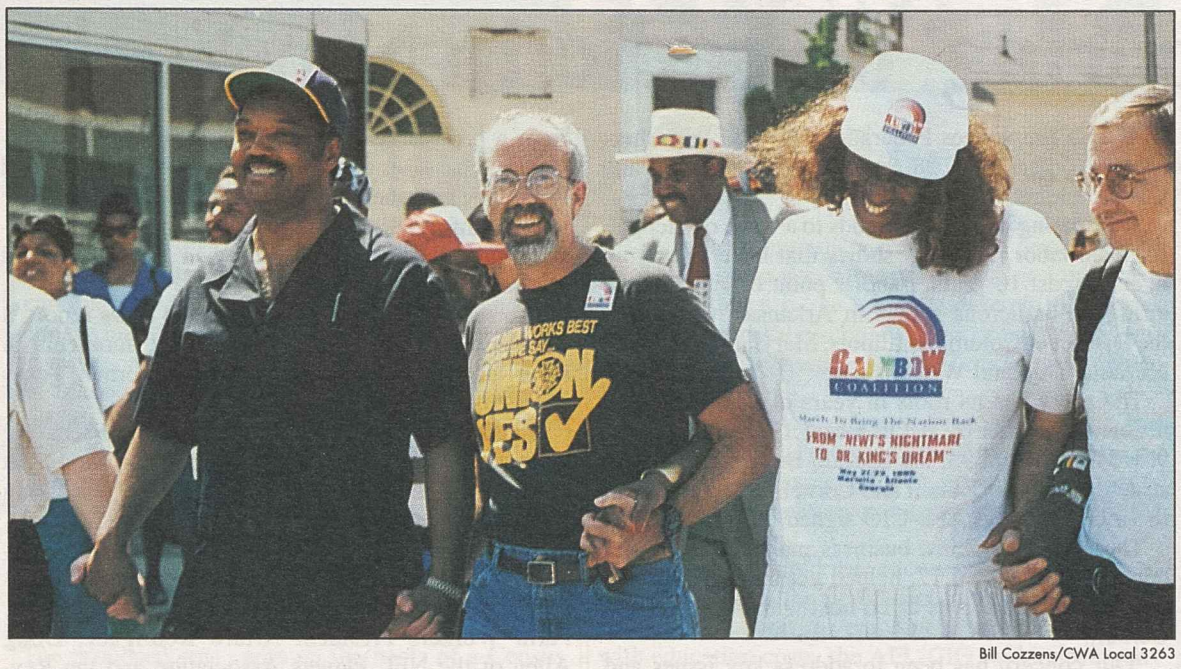
The poll of 1,255 adults by Louis Harris and Associates found that a substantial number of Americans prefer the Postal Service over various electronic methods, including electronic mail and FAXes. Some 31 percent of those surveyed said they preferred to use the mail when it comes to most of their communication.

The report was conducted for the Mailers Council, an industry group composed of large mailers whose products account for three-fourths of the Postal Service's volume.

Minimum wage bill dies

Under the threat of a veto by Republican Gov. Arne Carlson, the Minnesota House did not vote on a minimum wage bill.

The bill, which passed the state Senate May 19, would have increased the state's minimum wage from $4.25 to $5 per hour. The legislation could be resurrected during the legislature's 1996 session.



Bill Cozzens/CWA Local 3263

Atlanta AFL-CIO President Stewart Acuff marches with the Rev. Jesse Jackson and the Rev. Barbara King in the National Rainbow Coalition's three-day demonstration, "From Newt's Nightmare to Dr. King's Dream," May 21-23. Pointing to GOP efforts to gut Medicare/Medicaid, job safety, affirmative action and other worker protections, the marchers trekked from House Speaker Newt Gingrich's district office in Marietta, Ga., to Dr. Martin L. King's Atlanta grave to symbolize the hope and dreams of all Americans.

States chip away workers' comp

GOP legislatures accommodate business lobbies

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

Loretta Shelton of Axton, Va., was told by her supervisor to "step it up."

The 21-year-old, who was only in her second week on the job as a machine operator at Brown Products, followed orders. When she stuck her hand in the machine to retrieve a piece of cardboard that had gotten stuck, a blade came down and severed her hand at the wrist.

After more than two years of workers' compensation hearings and appeals, amid mounting medical bills, she settled with the company for so little money that it doesn't even cover her medical bills.

"Most workers' compensation systems across the country don't have an answer for people like Loretta," said James N. Ellenberger, AFL-CIO assistant safety and health director. "The entire health system itself is at risk and eventually someone will pay, even if it is not the employer or the insurer."

Her case first was heard by the deputy commissioner of the Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission, who ruled in favor of the company. The full commission reversed the decision.

But the company appealed on the very last day. Facing enormous medical bills and lost pay, Shelton settled out of court, Ellenberger said.

Virginia's occupational safety and health office fined the company $800 after an inspector discovered that the safety guards had been removed. However, that fine was reduced to $400 when safety guards were reinstalled.

There are thousands of cases like Loretta Shelton's. But with little oversight and enforcement from the federal government, workers' benefits are subject to the whims of 51 separate state workers' compensation laws — one for each state and the District of Columbia.

Business lobbies rule states

Following the onslaught of conservative victories in the 1994 elections, business lobbies have turned that whim more and more against workers.

Few would argue that workers' compensation — the nation's oldest social insurance program — is not in need of reform, said Ellenberger. But the focus has been on reducing the cost of wage replacement benefits, not on reducing deaths and injuries.

West Virginia's Democratic legislature passed comprehensive workers' compensation "deform" legislation this year, Ellenberger said. It adopted a measure offered by Gov. Gaston Caperton (D) that severely cuts benefits and eliminates so-called "liberality rules."

The law also forces workers into the employer's managed care program and removes confidentiality over all medical history and records of claimants.

In Montana, workers' compensation legislation recently was enacted that substantially lowers cash benefits for most permanent partial disabilities and limits access to benefits by changing the definition of what constitutes an injury. Montana's requirements for safety and health committees, enacted in 1993, also were weakened by exempting employers who claim that they have an effective safety program.

Meanwhile, in New York, legislation has been introduced that contains a "wish list" put together by the New York State Business Council, Ellenberger said. The bill would introduce age discrimination by reducing benefits at age 65 and eventually eliminating them by age 70.

Other provisions include a reduction in benefits and restrictions on workers' right to choose their own doctor.

In Oregon, despite four years of declining injury rates and substantial reductions in costs to employers, there is a move to adjust permanent partial disability benefits and freeze them for four years. Another proposal would restrict compensation for workers with pre-existing conditions and force injured workers to take "any" gainful employment.

Efforts to limit coverage

Legislatures in Indiana and Illinois are considering measures that would limit coverage of repetitive motion injuries. The Illinois bill also would allow the employer or the insurance company to choose the doctor.

In California, the legislature is considering expanding employer control of medical treatment, limiting vocational rehabilitation and requiring that the workplace be shown to be the predominant cause for a claim to be compensable.

Last year, New Hampshire reduced benefit levels for both total and partial permanent disability. Similar legislation also is pending in New Jersey, Nevada, Wisconsin, Michigan, Virginia and Missouri.

Income replacements vary from state to state. Wage replacements usually are two-thirds of a worker's pre-injury wage up to a maximum — which ranges from 200 percent of the average weekly wage in Iowa to 58 percent in Georgia and 62 percent in New York. There also are limits on amounts and length of benefits across states as well, causing workers with the same injuries and income levels to be treated differently depending on where they live.

Labor is fighting back

But labor organizations across the country are fighting back. Last year, the Colorado AFL-CIO sponsored a ballot initiative that would have given workers injured on the job the right to go to their own doctor. The initiative lost by a significant margin after insurers dumped enormous capital into the campaign.

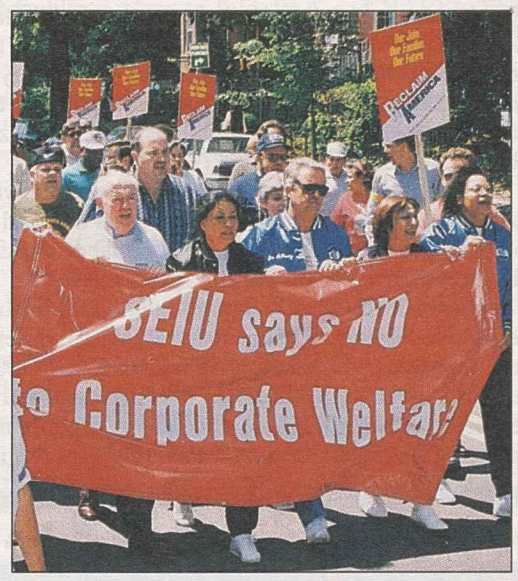
In a 5-2 vote, the Arkansas Supreme Court ruled 26 days before the election that the Arkansas AFL-CIO-sponsored "Safe Workplace Amendment" had a "deficient" ballot title. Again, the insurance industry, along with Wal-Mart and Tyson's Foods, poured in big bucks to bankroll the legal challenge.

The AFL-CIO Department of Occupational Safety and Health has several publications, including Workers' Compensation Notes and a Workers' Compensation Resource Manual, to assist union leaders and workers with workers' compensation cases and reform efforts.

AFL-CIO NEWS

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INSIDE



The Service Employees break from a legislative conference to march to the Republican Capitol Hill Club to protest corporate welfare. **(See Story, Page 4).**

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ECONOMY

10 *Unions fight to keep training, UI benefits*

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AFL-CIO NEWS

VOLUME 40, NUMBER 13 JUNE 19, 1995



Two unions' rich history points to one bright future. **See FOCUS, Pages 6-7.**

President Kirkland to retire in August

Donahue, Sweeney vie for top post

By Rex Hardesty

Lane Kirkland announced June 12 he will not seek another term as president of the AFL-CIO and a contest for the office emerged between Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue and Service Employees President John Sweeney.

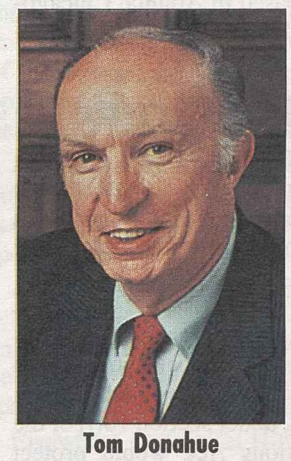
"Service in the cause of free and democratic trade unionism is a privilege," Kirkland said in announcing he would step down Aug. 1. "I am secure in the conviction that I have been faithful to it. A life spent in that service is a happy one and I regret nothing."

Donahue announced the same day he would be a candidate for president at the AFL-CIO Convention, which will be held in New York in October.

"I know the trade union movement, its leaders and members, as few other people do," Donahue told reporters. "I think I have the unique capacity to unite it at this time. These are hard times for working people all over the country, and I think we need to give vigorous leadership to the fight to make things better for all workers in this country."

The next day, AFSCME President Gerald W. McEntee announced that the coalition of 11 council members he speaks for will back Sweeney for president, Mine Workers President Richard L. Trumka

Continued on Page 8



Tom Donahue



John Sweeney

Ballenger bill would cripple worker safety

GOP measure threatens workplace protections

By Colleen M. O'Neill

American workers face a new threat to their health and safety on the job — OSHA-gutting legislation just introduced by Rep. Cass Ballenger (R-N.C.).

The measure put forth June 14 for House consideration, H.R. 1834, is "a direct attack on working men and women that puts their lives in danger," the AFL-CIO said in a statement. "The legislation breaks the promise made by Congress to American workers that their health and safety would be protected on the job."

Pointing out that more than 55,000 workers die from job hazards each year and more than 7 million are injured, the federation said, "Dramatic proof of the need for a strong job safety law can be found in the tragic 1991 fire that killed 25 workers in Hamlet, N.C. — not far from Ballenger's district."

"When the American people voted last November, they did not vote to roll back job safety protections or to make workplaces more dangerous, as Republican House members now would do. The AFL-CIO will do everything possible to oppose this cruel and regressive measure and to maintain the right to a safe job for every American worker."

Ballenger's bill would prevent the Occupational Safety and Health Administration from enforcing the law unless a worker is killed or hospitalized. It would take away a worker's right to file a complaint with OSHA before informing the employer of the complaint, leaving the worker open to possible retaliation.

Additionally, unions no longer would be able to file complaints, and workers no longer would be able to participate if employers contested citations.

Also, the measure would require lengthy risk assessments and cost-benefit analyses to be conducted before rules are issued, making it virtually impossible to set new standards.

Finally, Ballenger's legislation would repeal the Mine Safety and Health Act and eliminate MSHA, subjecting mines to watered-down OSHA requirements. And it calls for the elimination of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, the re-

Continued on Page 4



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

CWA members rally in front of the AT&T office in Baltimore one day before reaching agreement on a contract.

Unions protect AT&T retirees

By James B. Parks and Colleen M. O'Neill

The Communications Workers and Electrical Workers reached tentative agreement June 9 on a new contract with AT&T, avoiding a strike that would have affected the entire nation's telecommunications.

The 110,000 affected employees were to vote on ratification of the three-year agreement upon completion of talks at local unit tables. Those locals were scheduled to complete bargaining by June 16.

"We made substantial improvement in the areas of wages, health care, pension benefits, employment security and training and education for our members," said CWA President Morton Bahr. "We also protected the health care of our retirees, both ensuring that they won't have out-of-pocket costs for premiums and also improving coverage."

"After some very hard bargaining, we think this is a fair agreement that provides a good economic base for our members," said IBEW President John J. Barry. "We hope this contract will translate into a true cooperative effort between AT&T and the unions to stop job losses and ensure more opportunities for its existing work force."

Under the agreement, workers will receive a base wage increase of 10.8 percent compounded over three years, along with bonuses in cash and AT&T stock worth $3,400.

Average wages under the old contract ranged from $435 a week for account representatives to $807 a week for equipment installers.

Health care was improved, with 100 percent plan coverage and deductibles eliminated for the managed care plan. Retirees continue to receive 100 percent of premiums paid, and will be offered the same benefits as active employees in the managed care network.

The talks, which began April 3, reached a stalemate May 31 over whether retirees should pay some of the costs for health care. The negotiators decided to set that issue aside and to discuss other such key questions as union security, subcontracting and wages and pensions.

AT&T, which posted a record $4.7 billion net profit last year, had wanted the 22,000 union members who retired after March 1990 to share their benefit costs. But the unions were able to hold the line for their retirees.

Under the agreement, pension benefits would be increased by 12 percent effective July 1, with the

Continued on Page 9

ORGANIZING

AFA flies at ValuJet

Proving that so-called low-cost airlines have employees who need a voice, some 400 workers at Atlanta-based ValuJet Airlines voted overwhelmingly June 1 to join the Flight Attendants.

Despite its standing as the nation's most profitable air carrier, ValuJet had imposed poor working conditions and low pay on its employees, helping to ensure the union's victory. The vote was unanimous, 133-0.

"The choice to unionize is a positive one for both the flight attendants and the company," said AFA President Pat Friend. "The airline will now have a much happier, productive work force whose work life will be enhanced and protected by a collective bargaining agreement."

The attendants are based in Atlanta, Chicago-Midway, Dallas, Fort Lauderdale and Washington-Dulles.

NLRB targets Overnite

The National Labor Relations Board will seek a nationwide court order prohibiting Overnite Transportation Co. from using threats, promises and other illegal actions against workers seeking to join the Teamsters.

Workers have voted for the IBT at 14 Overnite locations, representing 1,536 employees. Workers at 25 terminals are seeking new elections, based on claims the company illegally threatened them.

A federal injunction, under section 10(j) of the National Labor Relations Act, would protect workers at those terminals, as well as the thousands of other Overnite employees who have yet to vote.

Overnite officials have been charged with more than 40 NLRB complaints involving hundreds of illegal acts, the union said. The board is seeking to overturn several elections the company won by violating federal labor laws.

NLRB defines medical unit

The National Labor Relations Board ruled that the medical technologists working with Group Health Association in Washington, D.C., are professional employees.

The board ruled the GHA workers met the requirements of Section 2(12) of the National Labor Relations Act, which defines professionals as workers whose jobs are predominantly intellectual and varied, exhibit discretion and judgment, accomplish a task that cannot be standardized and require knowledge of an advanced nature.

The ruling stems from an effort by the Medical Technologists Association (MTA) to decertify the Office and Professional Employees as the representative for 42 GHA medical technologists.

The board, after finding the technologists were professionals, said the workers could not stay in the OPEIU unit they're in, since it's a non-professional unit. But at the same time, the board threw the issue of representation back to the workers and denied the MTA's request to represent them because there are other professionals on staff and they may not be eligible to form a separate bargaining unit.

UFW savors big win at winery

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

By a two-thirds majority, farm workers at Chateau Ste. Michelle cast an historic vote for union representation.

The overwhelming vote for the Farm Workers, cast by secret ballot at the largest winery in Washington state, marked the first time in 25 years that farm workers in the state have been able to win union representation.

"These Washington state farm workers have demonstrated that they can win recognition for their union through an election even in a state where there is no collective bargaining law," said UFW President Arturo Rodriguez. "This triumph shows how farm workers in other states can do the same thing."

The election resulted from an agreement reached April 28 between the union and Stimson Lane Ltd., owner of Chateau Ste. Michelle. The company agreed to remain neutral during the organizing drive and allowed UFW organizers to talk to the workers during non-working hours for seven days prior to the election.

Protected by the agreement, the mostly Latino work force wore buttons with the message "Vote Fuerte, Contracto Fuerte" (Strong Vote, Strong Contract).

Truck driver Jose Ruiz said, "The most important issue is job security." Ruiz, married with two children, said job security is essential, since the company never pays him overtime, even when he works 60-hour weeks during harvest.

The agreement also established a five-member commission to oversee the vote and set a 75-day deadline to reach a contract. Former U.S. House Speaker Thomas S. Foley (D) was jointly chosen by the UFW and the company to chair the commission, with the remainder of the panel chosen equally by the union and the company.

If a contract is not reached in 75 days, the agreement stipulates that the parties will submit remaining issues to an arbitrator.

The UFW victory was a tribute to labor and community solidarity. The Stimson Lane neutrality agreement was facilitated by the AFL-CIO, with President Lane Kirkland assigning his executive assistant, Jim Baker, to help.

And the expenses of the five-member commission were funded by the Joseph A. Beirne Foundation, established to honor the first president of the Communications Workers.

A UFW boycott of Stimson Lane was buttressed by labor, religious and environmental groups. Last summer, employees of Alaska Airlines canceled a big party at the winery's main facility in Woodinville, Wash., in support of the workers.

> *"(A string of UFW victories) is fulfilling the dream of Cesar Chavez to build a strong national union for farm workers."*
>
> **— Arturo Rodriguez,**
> ***Farm Workers president***

Church groups persuaded dozens of restaurants not to carry the wine and participated in demonstrations at shareholder meetings. The union suspended all boycott activities after the parties reached the election agreement.

A major issue in the new contract will be extending medical and possibly pension benefits to temporary farm workers. Job security, wage increases and grievance procedures also are important issues. Ste. Michelle's full-time workers currently start at $6.75 an hour and earn as much as $10.30, with an average wage of $7.49.

They also get paid medical benefits and two to five weeks of vacation per year.

The company hires up to 80 temporary workers for the fall grape harvest and pays them $5.40 an hour with minimal medical insurance. "We hope to extend benefits of collective bargaining to all of the workers — full time and part time," said Rodriguez, who noted that the workers started the campaign to organize about eight years ago. "Last April, they decided they wanted to affiliate, so the union came to their aid."

The Washington state election, following the union's 10th straight victory in a vote at Sunrise Mushroom in Watsonville, Calif., is "fulfilling the dream of Cesar Chavez to build a strong national union for farm workers," said Rodriguez.

The UFW's membership currently is concentrated in California, the only state that has an agricultural labor relations law. The federal labor law guaranteeing the rights of workers to organize excludes farm workers.

Washington state has the third-highest number of farm workers in the nation. "There's a lot of interest, but we're not concentrating on any one group yet," Rodriguez declared. "But people want to know how we did it."

Decatur to host 'war zone' rally

Striking and locked-out workers will be joined by labor and community supporters to celebrate "the American spirit of solidarity in Decatur, Ill.," at a "war zone" rally June 25.

Decatur has become the front line in a war in which management has used permanent striker replacements in an attempt to get unionized workers to surrender. Some 7 percent of the beleaguered community's work force has been on strike or locked out by their employers, A.E. Staley Manufacturing, Caterpillar Inc. and Bridgestone/Firestone.

Both the Staley lock-out of Paperworkers and the UAW strike against Caterpillar continue. Although the Rubber Workers have ended their strike at Bridgestone, many of the workers have yet to be called back to work and a boycott of tires made by Bridgestone is still in place.

Among the speakers scheduled at the march, religious service and rally will be UPIU President Wayne Glenn; UAW Regional Director Paul Korman; Mine Workers President Richard L. Trumka; Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers President Robert Wages; Glass, Molders and Pottery Workers President James Hatfield; Rep. David E. Bonior (D-Mich.); and the Rev. Jesse L. Jackson.

For details, contact UPIU Local 7837, 217/876-7006; UAW Local 751, 217/428-7706; or URW Local 713, 217/875-7550.

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Director of Information: Rex Hardesty

Editor: Michael Byrne

Assistant Editors: Candice Johnson, David Kameras, James B. Parks

Staff Writers: Muriel H. Cooper, Mike Hall Colleen M. O'Neill, Sharolyn A. Rosier

Graphics/Layout: Stan Hitt, Hindi M. Fracasse

AFL-CIO Headquarters: 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006
Telephone: (202) 637-5010
CompuServe: 76004, 3601

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LEGISLATION

TEAM Act enemy of cooperation

Sham programs show resistance to partnerships

By James B. Parks

With Congress poised to begin markup of the so-called TEAM Act, organized labor stepped up its fight for real cooperation in the workplace rather than sham programs designed to keep unions out.

The misnamed Teamwork for Employees and Management Act, S.295 and H.R. 743, introduced by Sen. Nancy L. Kassebaum (R-Kan.) and Rep. Steve Gunderson (R-Wis.), would lift the 60-year-old ban on certain types of company-sponsored employee committees by amending Section 8(a)(2) of the National Labor Relations Act. The House Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee is expected to mark up its version of the bill this month, said Peggy Taylor, AFL-CIO legislative director.

Despite claims by business groups, most employers are not ready to accept the labor movement's offer to work with management through real partnerships and employee participation programs, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue said.

Instead, most management is determined to maintain a union-free workplace and develop alternatives to true partnerships, Donahue told the Industrial Relations Association Congress. The last thing employers want is to face workers "who enjoy real power because that would threaten their unilateral control over the workplace," he said.

A few employers, especially in the telecommunications and steel industries, are willing to allow workers greater control over their work because they realize that it can lower costs and increase quality, Donahue said.

"In virtually every sector of the economy" there are examples of labor and management working together "to advance the interests of workers and their employers by redesigning the way work is performed, the way business is managed and the way decisions are made," he said.

Partnership vs. "empowerment"

But most employers, Donahue said, are seeking so-called "empowered work forces" as an alternative to partnership models. Empowerment "is, as the president of the National Association of Manufacturers stated, entirely task-driven." These employers are willing to give workers more control over their work because they realize it is a better way to get work done, he said, but nothing in these arrangements "allows employees any power to determine the terms and conditions of employment."

The majority of workers want to be more involved in their employers' decision making, but they doubt that employers are willing to share power enough to make a difference, according to a follow-up report on a survey by Richard Freeman of Harvard and Joel Rogers of the University of Wisconsin.

"Employees welcome involvement committees and other managerial efforts to increase participation. But the majority believe that management is unwilling to empower them to the extent that would improve overall enterprise performance as much as possible," the study found.

The AFL-CIO Executive Council unanimously called in 1994 for a new workplace model based on a partnership between workers and management. The report, "The New American Workplace: A Labor Perspective," called for increased decision making for workers; redesigning jobs so workers could perform a greater variety of skills; making workers self-managers; and giving workers, through their unions, more decision making at every level of the company.

National Labor Relations Board Chairman William B. Gould IV weighed into the debate by disputing business claims that the board's Electromation decision chills cooperative programs.

Electromation's employee committees were clearly illegal because the company dominated them and used them to discuss terms of employment, he told a New York University labor conference.

"Any fears focused on that decision are relatively insignificant. Electromation poses no real danger to cooperative initiatives," he said.

Another new study bolsters labor's argument, showing that employee participation programs work best when workers feel they are sharing in the benefits. The study's authors, Rosemary Blatt of Cornell University and Eileen Applebaum of the Economic Policy Institute, found that skilled and semi-skilled telecommunications workers saw less supervision as the main benefit of employee involvement programs along with increased use of their skills. Managers cited lower costs, better quality and greater problem solving.

But low-paid sewing machine operators at a plant that shifted from a mass production line system to a "modular" system, where teams did all the work on a product at their work site, were less satisfied with the added responsibility.

The main reason, Blatt said, was that the company also changed the wage structure in a way that kept the low-paid workers from benefiting from the cost savings.

BCT objects to settlement

Meanwhile, the Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers filed objections to a new settlement reached between the NLRB and Frito-Lay over the company's illegal worker participation program at its Portland, Ore., plant.

Under the April settlement, the company must rescind all changes made by the illegal "Fund the Future" program and bargain with BCT Local 364 over any actions taken as a result of the process.

The settlement is an improvement over a previous one, "but falls short of what we had hoped for, given the clearly defiant behavior of the company. In short, we are not satisfied," said BCT President Frank Hurt. "Rest assured that we will continue to carefully monitor the company's actions and bring any questionable activities to the attention of the NLRB."

CAPITOL DIGEST

House and Senate conferees were trying to meld two Republican budget resolutions that would cost working families thousands of dollars more for Medicare and higher education in order to fund tax breaks for the wealthy.

The major difference in the two bills is the size of the tax breaks. The House bill calls for some $340 billion while the Senate seeks about $170 billion. The AFL-CIO opposes both versions.

Both versions claim to balance the budget in seven years. But in order to do so, and to provide a tax cut for wealthy individuals and corporations, they would dramatically reduce the health and economic security of the elderly, cut back substantially on educational opportunities for working families and threaten the health and safety of workers on the job.

President Clinton announced his own budget proposal June 13 that calls for significantly smaller Medicare and Medicaid cuts and no reductions in education spending, balancing the budget in 10 years.

A resolution is only a blueprint, without authorizing actual expenditures or cuts. When the appropriations and reconciliation process begins, with all the proposed spending cuts and tax changes shaped into specific legislation, the veto becomes an option.

Elsewhere on Capitol Hill:

AMTRAK — New York-area union members gathered in Staten Island to protest votes by Rep. Susan Molinari (R-N.Y.) to tamper with current and valid contracts between rail labor and Amtrak, as well as her votes to cut Medicare and student loans.

During consideration of a bill to reauthorize funds for Amtrak, the rail subcommittee, which Molinari chairs, agreed to provisions that would override any existing contract between Amtrak and its employees that limits Amtrak's right to subcontract jobs and services.

However, on June 14, the full Transportation Committee voted 38-22 to strike the contracting-out provisions. Eleven Republicans, but not Molinari, agreed to leave those issues to the collective bargaining process.

STRIKER REPLACEMENT — As expected, the House Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee approved a bill that would overturn President Clinton's executive order barring federal contracts with companies that use permanent replacements for striking workers.

The bill, introduced by Rep. William Goodling (R-Pa.), the committee chairman, was approved by a 22-16 vote along party lines.

RECESS — A number of AFL-CIO grass-roots lobbying activities are being planned over the July 4 holiday. Tentative plans call for staff assignments and paid media in about two dozen congressional districts, with affiliates urged to extend that reach to districts in which they have a particular interest.

— Mike Hall

Public overwhelmingly opposes attack on 40-hour week

By David Kameras

Efforts by the Republican majority in Congress to scrap the 40-hour workweek simply do not resonate with the American people.

A poll released by the Economic Policy Institute shows that 64 percent of workers oppose substituting compensatory time for overtime pay, with the opposition rising to 70 percent among hourly workers, who would be most affected.

In addition, workers said that fewer hours worked in the next week is not adequate compensation for working overtime this week, and a whopping 75 percent said working five to 25 additional hours with little or no notice would be a "burden."

Even more dramatic results were reported in a Peter Hart poll conducted for the AFL-CIO. Union members, by 84 percent, said they consider the 40-hour workweek to be a very important issue.

"While workers may desire greater flexibility, they do not want to sacrifice overtime pay and established work schedules to obtain it," said EPI economist Edith Rasell, whose study, "Time is Still Money: Americans Prefer Overtime Pay to Comp Time," debunks the myth that workers are eager to concede one of their hardest-won rights.

"Opposition is extremely broad-based," she said. "Both men and women, with and without children, of all political viewpoints oppose a policy to replace overtime pay with compensatory time off."

Appearing June 8 before a House committee, Rasell testified that of the 8.3 million workers who receive overtime pay in a typical week, including 13 percent of all hourly workers, nearly two-thirds have family incomes of less than $40,000. Some 44 percent earn less than $8 an hour ($17,000 annual full-time equivalent), 60.6 percent earn $10 an hour ($20,000 a year) or less and 81.3 percent earn $14 an hour ($30,000 a year) or less.

"Thus, overtime pay is likely to be an important addition to earnings for these workers," she said. "The change in the overtime pay provision of the Fair Labor Standards Act would reduce the incomes of a large number of workers, many of whom in recent years have seen declining wages and incomes."

An analysis by the Washington Post reveals that the divide between the rich and the working middle class would widen further if GOP-proposed tax cuts become law, with more than 50 percent of the benefits going to families making more than $100,000 a year. Those in the $30,000-$50,000 range would see 11.6 percent and those making $30,000 or less would see a paltry 4.8 percent.

"Quite obviously, these programs would make unequal incomes even more unequal, particularly at the extremes," said Stanford University economist Paul Krugman.

"We're going through a period in which trade and technology are like an economic natural disaster for the half of the working population that doesn't have a college degree," added Frank Levy of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. "I would think that the last thing you would want to do right now is to have government make a bad situation even worse by extending new tax breaks to the rich or cutting spending in precisely those programs that transfer income to the poor."

JOB SAFETY

Ergonomics rule backed

Score one for organized labor in the fight for standards governing ergonomics and repetitive stress injuries.

Sacramento Superior Court Judge James Ford announced his intended decision in late May to direct the California Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board to adopt an ergonomics standard within 18 months — giving the board six months to develop a proposal and 12 months to get it through the rule-making process.

The California AFL-CIO, with support from several allies, had sued the board, citing legislation that called for adoption of a state standard addressing RSI by Jan. 1, 1995.

Overexertion key to injuries

Falling objects, falls to the same level and overexertion rank as the leading causes of more than half of all serious occupational injuries and illnesses, the Bureau of Labor Statistics has reported.

Among all industries, according to the BLS analysis of 1993 figures, nursing homes held the highest level of injuries from overexertion or worker falls, confirming a recently released report by the Service Employees.

Loggers rank first among those struck by objects, while roofers led in falls to a lower level. Categories of truck drivers, non-construction laborers (except those on farms), and nursing aides and orderlies each account for at least 100,000 cases of days away from work per year.

UAW, GM in safety pact

Joint research on work-related injuries and illnesses is the focus of a recently signed agreement between UAW, General Motors and the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health.

The trio will seek to develop new technologies and provide education and training in such areas as safe lifting guidelines, methods to determine exposures to certain substances and prevention of back injuries.

The joint initiative will last five years.

Conoco to pay $1.5 million

Conoco Inc. and OSHA have agreed on $1.5 million in penalties to settle charges after a blast at a Louisiana refinery killed one worker and injured another.

The explosion occurred during start-up operations on a catalytic cracking unit. OSHA cited the company for failure to provide training and information, failure to perform required inspections and tests and violations of process safety management, personal protection equipment, confined spaces and record-keeping standards.

Conoco also agreed to perform a corporate-wide process safety management audit.



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

AFGE President John N. Sturdivant addresses the union's legislative conference. Seated at right are Oklahoma City bombing survivor Jane Graham and Rita Mason, AFGE national vice president.

AFGE pushes workplace safety

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

The safety and security of federal workplaces was uppermost in the minds of hundreds of delegates gathered in Washington for the Government Employees legislative conference.

Delegates spent time on Capitol Hill lobbying on that issue, and against the congressional attack on benefits and pay raises. The union also released a report urging the Clinton administration to consider moving the responsibility for security at government buildings out of the General Services Administration and into the Justice Department.

The report was released at a news conference where AFGE President John N. Sturdivant and four survivors of the bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building enumerated problems and recommendations for their resolution.

Federal employees and citizens on federal property expect to be safe from harm, and look to the federal government to provide the necessary security and protection, Sturdivant told reporters. "The government needs vast improvement in its effort to protect its workers and property."

The four survivors, employees of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, were Jane Graham, Jaroy McGuirt, Joyce Gallow and V.Z. Lawton. They urged tighter controls on access to federal buildings, limited parking near government buildings and greater use of guards.

The report states the GSA's Federal Protective Service was "not sufficiently staffed" to provide security at the more than 8,000 buildings and offices under GSA control across the nation. The number of federal protective officers has been reduced from 2,200 in 1985 to fewer than 400 in 1995.

The lack of security was evident at the Alfred J. Murrah Building in Oklahoma City, where "there was only one guard on duty who was responsible for protecting a multibuilding office complex," said Graham, president of Local 3138.

The GSA uses services of more than 180 contractors, many of whom do little background checks and have minimal training requirements. Only 17 states require any training for security guards, the report states. Eighteen states do not require any training for guards equipped with lethal weapons.

Sturdivant also pointed to the lack of communication between federal police officers and local law enforcement officials.

Other recommendations include requiring identification badges for all persons granted access to federal facilities; restricting access to private buildings that house federal offices; and providing fair compensation, training and authority for federal police officers.

Speakers at the conference included Sen. Christopher Dodd (D-Conn.) and Rep. James Moran (D-Va.).

Worker safety under seige from Republican measure

Continued from Page 1

search component of federal job safety efforts.

Nearly half of the budget left for federal safety and health likely would be earmarked for consultation, noted Peg Seminario, director of the AFL-CIO Department of Occupational Safety and Health, compared with the current 10 percent that goes for consultation activities.

Consequently, inspections and enforcement activities would be curtailed severely, with employers receiving warnings instead of citations and fines in nearly every instance, except where a worker dies or is hospitalized.

On another front, House and Senate conferees are meeting to discuss their budget resolutions. The House version merged OSHA and MSHA and cut that joint budget by 20 percent, while the Senate called for a 50 percent budget cut for both agencies.

AFL-CIO estimates show the potentially devastating impact the budget proposals would have on workplace safety and health:

- Thousands more fatalities, injuries and illnesses; billions more in workers' compensation.
- Fewer inspections (OSHA currently has the resources to inspect workplaces only once every 88 years).
- No deterrent effect, as far fewer inspections will be performed.
- No protection from new hazards, as the lack of funds would halt standard-setting activities.
- Elimination of such valuable programs as training and education, as well as technical assistance for employers.
- Cuts in federal funding for state plans.

There would be a similar effect at MSHA, even though every study ever conducted has demonstrated that strong enforcement has led to safer mines.

The elimination of NIOSH would mean the end of job safety research, the federation pointed out, because it is the only federal agency with responsibility to conduct such research. Likewise, education and training, as well as health hazard evaluations, would be eliminated.

President Clinton's veto of current-year rescissions temporarily blocked the threat to safety, but the fight has been renewed with the introduction of the legislation by Ballenger, chair of the Economic and Educational Opportunities subcommittee on work force protections. Hearings are tentatively scheduled by that subcommittee for June 20 and 28.

The Senate also is preparing to turn its attention to workplace safety, with Sen. Nancy L. Kassebaum (R-Kan.) having scheduled two days of oversight hearings on OSHA for June 21 and 22, and several regulatory "reform" initiatives slated for floor action by Majority Leader Robert Dole (R-Kan.)

"We expect the legislation put forth by Sen. Dole to be as atrocious as possible," Seminario said. "The Republicans are looking to gut regulations in the name of 'reform.' "

Public supports OSHA by overwhelming count

Americans are committed to strong health and safety laws and programs.

That's the finding of Peter D. Hart Research Associates Inc. in a nationwide poll the last week of April. Nearly 65 percent of union respondents said they would oppose a proposal to cut OSHA's budget and reduce its authority. The same percentage of the general public respondents agreed.

On specific issues, 65 percent of union respondents and 54 percent of the general public agreed that the workplace would not be as safe without OSHA, while 74 percent of unionists and 62 percent of the general public agreed that the high incidence of deaths and disabilities on the job forms a very strong reason to oppose limits on OSHA.

BARGAINING

IBT takes carhaul public

The Teamsters will launch a nationwide consumer outreach campaign, similar to one that helped win a carhaul contract four years ago — and will choose a time to strike, if necessary, when a job action would be most effective.

"We won't be suckered into playing by the companies' game plan," IBT President Ron Carey said. The carhaul companies would prefer a strike now, he said, because auto dealers have about 78 days of inventory, with sales declining as the industry heads into the slowest time of the year before new models arrive.

The new campaign comes as representatives of 70 IBT locals unanimously recommended that their 12,000 members reject the companies' final offer.

The local representatives were particularly upset over the proposal to eliminate a provision that restricts the companies' ability to shift work to non-union subsidiaries. The companies also want to cut real wages despite record earnings and executive raises.

Staley to give 'best' offer

Responding to a request by locked-out Paperworkers, A.E. Staley management agreed to present its best comprehensive offer. The two sides will discuss the offer June 23.

"We're just totally frustrated with this thing," said UPIU Local 7837 President David Watts. "We don't know why it takes nearly another month for them to come back on this. They've known what they want for three years."

Watts made the request in a May 30 meeting with company officials. He asked for a proposal that would address four issues: the contract itself, retirement and severance package, amnesty for union activists fired during the nearly three-year-old dispute and a return-to-work plan.

The 760 Staley employees were locked out on June 27, 1993. The company demanded that workers agree to unlimited subcontracting, the loss of several hundred bargaining unit jobs, 12-hour rotating shifts with no premium pay and the gutting of seniority protections. When the union balked, the workers were locked out and replaced by scabs.

Pension ruling derails pact

A state court ruling on a public-sector pension ballot initiative has derailed a tentative agreement between the state of Oregon and the Oregon Public Employees Union, an affiliate of the Service Employees.

The change came after a judge ruled unconstitutional parts of a November 1994 ballot measure approved by voters that required participants in the state pension system to contribute 6 percent of their salary to the pension fund.

OPEU, the state's largest public-sector union, negotiated a 7 percent increase over the next two years to compensate for the pension payment. The agreement was to be effective July 1. The workers currently are voting on the agreement through a mail ballot.

The state appealed the ruling and agreed to continue paying the 6 percent pension contribution until the issue is resolved. But Gov. John Kitzhaber (D) and the Republican-controlled legislature moved to reopen talks with OPEU because they said the state cannot afford to pay both the wage increase and the pension contribution.

IBC, BAC get N.J. contracts

The Carpenters and Bricklayers ratified separate contracts with the Building Contractors Association of New Jersey that freeze wages. Previous contracts with both unions expired April 30.

The IBC's three-year agreement calls for a freeze in the first year, with wage reopeners for the remaining two years. Under the agreement, which covers some 15,000 workers throughout the state, journeymen benefits will be raised by 5 cents in the first year with the money going into an industry fund.

The 18-month contract for BAC Locals 4 and 5 calls for a six-month wage freeze but establishes by May 1, 1996, a standard wage-and-benefits package equal to the highest rate paid in areas covered by the locals, $37.22 for Local 4 and $36.05 for Local 5. The agreement covers 5,250 workers.



Gary Schoicht/UAW

Retiring UAW President Owen Bieber goes over convention details with Vice President Stephen P. Yokich, who was elected later by delegates to succeed Bieber. The delegate at center is unidentified.

UAW elects Yokich, sets agenda

New leadership ready to wage political fight

By James B. Parks
Anaheim, Calif.

Delegates to the UAW convention prepared to face future challenges with new leadership and a renewed emphasis on political action.

Four of the union's six top offices changed hands. The 1,700 delegates elected Stephen P. Yokich, a vice president for 15 years, to replace retiring President Owen Bieber. Roy Wyse, director of UAW Region 5, was elected to replace Secretary-Treasurer Bill Casstevens. Bieber, Casstevens and Vice President Stan Marshall stepped down after reaching the mandatory retirement age of 65.

Regional Director Jack Laskowski and Richard Shoemaker, executive administrative assistant to Bieber, were elected vice presidents. Incumbent Vice Presidents Carolyn Forrest and Ernest Lofton were re-elected. Charlie Marshall was elected as trustee.

"When it comes to politics, it is time to get back to basics, starting with the politics of our own members," Yokich said. "We will be gearing up for the 1996 election campaign including the struggle to re-elect President Clinton and retake control of Congress and the statehouses."

"We are at the core of a great social movement that addresses the needs and aspirations of millions of Americans," he said. "We are proud to be advocates of a more humane, democratic and just society."

In his farewell address, Bieber challenged the union to fight the right-wing assault on social justice.

"It is time to say 'enough' to those who say that the trade union movement is too weak and too small and too old-fashioned to make a difference in today's world," Bieber said.

"If we're so damn weak, why have powerful corporations spent hundreds of millions of dollars to create a union-busting industry in this country?"

Bieber praised President Clinton for having "the guts" to take on Japan for unfair trade practices. But he warned that labor must mobilize behind Clinton to help fight "the budget-cut atrocities that the Republicans will try to impose on our country's working families in the next 100 days."

Instead of fear and uncertainty, this is a time of hope and opportunity, Bieber said. "Call it solidarity, call it brotherhood and sisterhood . . . it is what happens when the power of community hooks up with the power of justice." That theme was repeated by numerous speakers.

In an address from the White House via satellite, Clinton recalled his visit to the Caterpillar picket line during the 1992 campaign.

"Their struggle showed me better than any report or any poll that the fight to save the American dream, and the fight to save American families, must begin with the fight to save America's workers and their incomes and their jobs."

"Of course, the struggle at Caterpillar is still not over, but my administration" continues to walk with you and we'll stay there," he said to a standing ovation.

Clinton defended his decision to impose trade sanctions against Japan on June 28 unless it agrees to open its markets to American-made cars and car parts, saying that "it is simply a question of fairness. We have tried and tried other means, and we have tried long enough. Now we must act decisively to level the playing field and to protect American jobs."

Three Democratic U.S. House members — Maxine Waters (Calif.), Minority Whip David E. Bonior (Mich.) and Hispanic Caucus Chair Ed Pastor (Ariz.) — exhorted the delegates to take the country back from what Waters called "the mean-spirited, low-down leadership" of the Republican-controlled Congress.

"Newt Gingrich is playing with our lives," said Waters, adding that workers cannot allow him and his allies to distract and divide them over the false issues of affirmative action and public morality. "We know what the issue is — it's jobs," she said.

"The union movement has always seemed to understand something that many of the young Republicans in Congress have never seemed to grasp: that America didn't survive the Great Depression and defeat Nazism and Communism and build the strongest economy in the world just to make a quick buck," Bonior said. "We did it to build stronger families and stronger communities and to advance the cause of freedom."

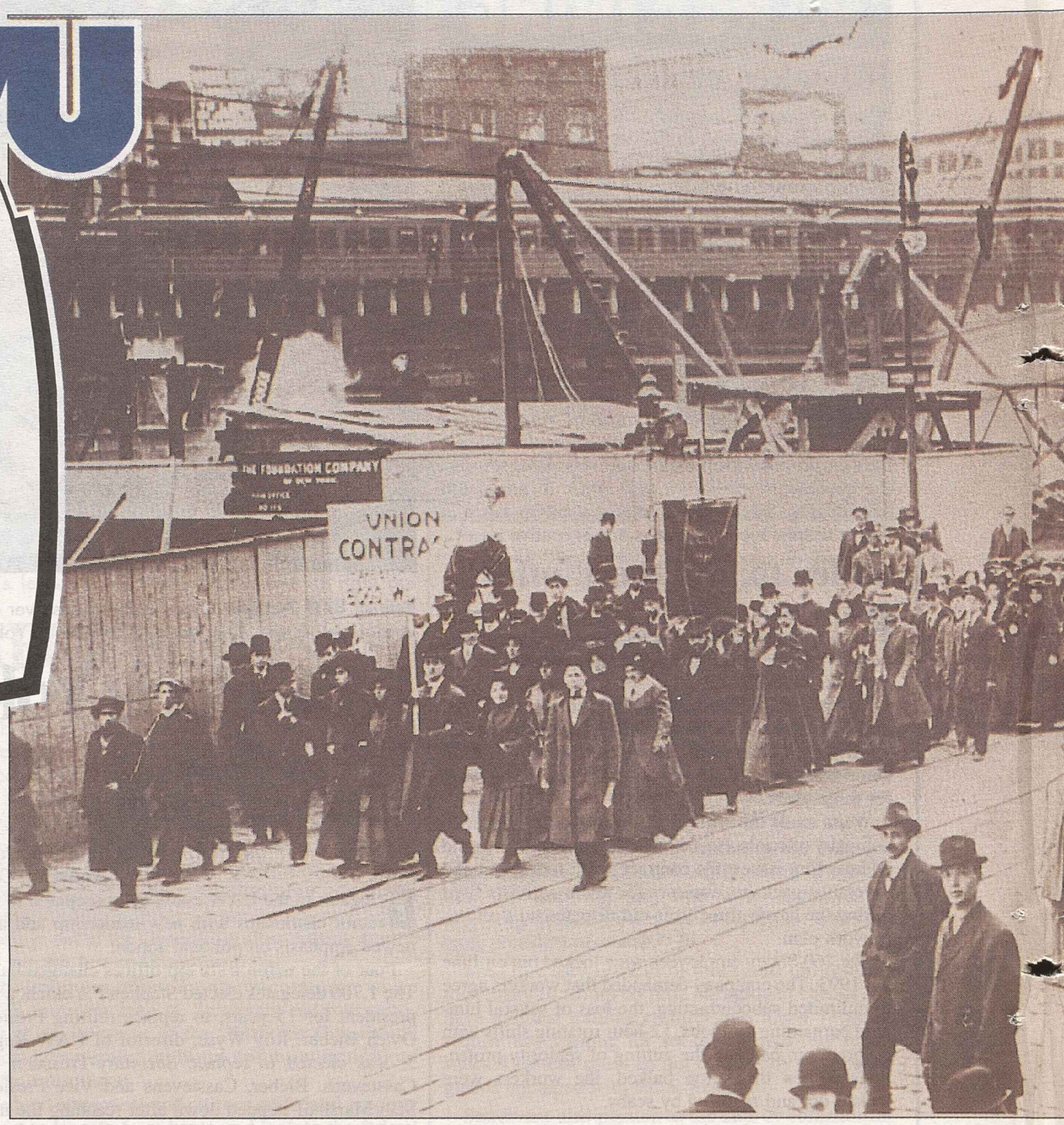
Pastor rallied delegates to political action, proclaiming, "We're going to have to begin again fighting in the trenches, ensuring that we register people to vote and go to the polls. You have the ability in 1996 to stop this Contract on America," he said, invoking the late Cesar Chavez's rallying cry, "Si Se Puede — It can be done!"

Marcello Malentacchi, general secretary of the International Metalworkers Federation, warned that in a global economy unions no longer "can simply rely on politicians, parties and governments — we will have to increasingly rely on ourselves. We must develop an international strategy that will target and confront the most vicious violators of human rights."

The union's social justice award was presented to former President Jimmy Carter, former Sen. Howard Metzenbaum and the late Roy Reuther, the union's former political director.

Other speakers included AFSCME President Gerald W. McEntee, Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich, NAACP Chair Myrlie Evers-Williams and Dr. Henry Lyons, president of the National Baptist Convention USA.

ACTWU



New York's cloakmakers struck in 1910 in an early show of ILGWU strength. A year later, the Triangle Shirtwaist fire galvaniz

With shared legacies of social activism, two unions prepare for . . .

The time to UNITE

By Muriel H. Cooper

The historic needle trades unions — with two of the richest histories in U.S. labor — are about to be sewn together.

The expected ratifying votes next week in Miami Beach at separate conventions of the Ladies' Garment Workers and the Clothing and Textile Workers would trigger the inaugural convention of UNITE —the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees.

The ratification will marry two proud traditions while providing increased resources and opportunities for workers here and abroad.

"The moment is right to combine the strengths of two great unions," said Jay Mazur, who will move from president of ILGWU to president of UNITE.

This moment, noted ACTWU President Jack Sheinkman, includes "a Republican Congress that seeks to dismantle 60 years of social gains and replace them with a future scenario where corporations will call the shots and workers will be pushed back." Sheinkman will retire from union office and devote his time to his chief executive role at the Amalgamated Bank of New York.

"That's why now is the opportune moment for us to come together under one banner," he said.

The UNITE banner speaks to both the storied pasts of the unions and to the workers' future challenges.

A century of struggle

The ILGWU was founded in 1900 and the Clothing Workers in 1914 —both products of the horrible conditions of garment workers of the time. Wages were paid infrequently and primitive work places threatened life and limb. Employers inflicted both physical and mental abuses.

When the 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist fire killed 146 garment workers, the ILGWU raised an alarm that resulted in new government safety regulations.

Describing themselves as cut from the same cloth, ACTWU and ILGWU have demonstrated their belief that activist trade unionism addresses workers' needs both on and off the shop floor.

"We led the fights for the Fair Labor Standards Act to eliminate sweatshops, outlaw child labor and ensure a 40-hour workweek," Sheinkman said. "Our activism brought about national unemployment insurance and a minimum wage."

Under the leadership of Sidney Hillman, the Clothing Workers signed an historic agreement for a 44-hour week in 1919, established the Amalgamated Bank and an unemployment insurance plan in 1923, cooperative apartments in the Bronx in 1926 and an employer-paid health and life insurance program in 1941.

The ILGWU, with strong leadership from David Dubinsky, created a union health center in 1914, a summer resort in the Poconos in 1920, a 35-hour week in 1933, an industrywide pension fund in 1943, an employer-financed health insurance plan in 1944 and a major national television campaign ("Look for the Union Label") in 1975.

The Clothing Workers merged with the Textile Workers in 1976, when TWUA needed an ally in its decade-long campaign to organize J.P. Stevens' southern textile plants. The new ACTWU immediately launched a worldwide boycott of J.P. Stevens' products and in 1980 signed its first agreement with the firm. **(See accompanying story.)**

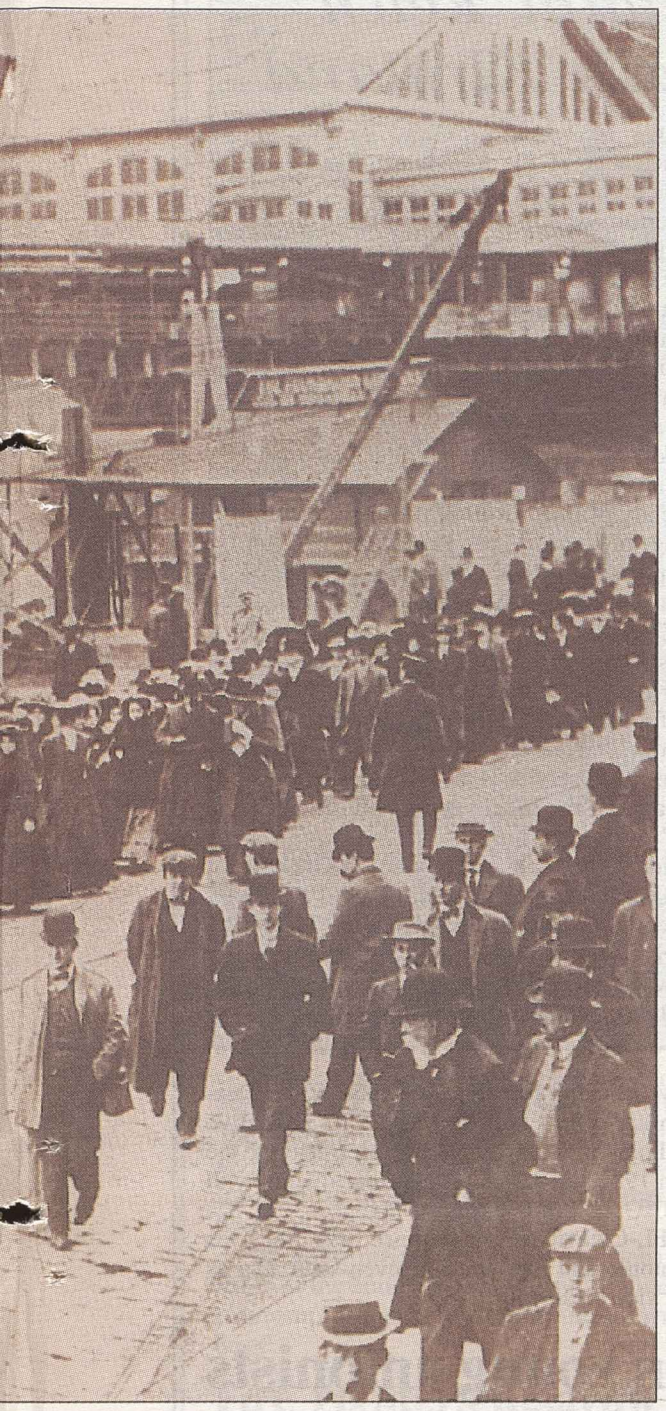
In the 1970s, ACTWU and ILGWU faced a major threat together with the rising tide of low-wage, foreign apparel. Taking to the streets in 1977 for joint nationwide rallies, thousands of workers warned Americans that importing goods produced by exploited, low-wage labor would hurt communities.

That battle continues today as greedy corporations slither out of their responsibilities to lifelong workers and their communities.

"North American workers are in direct competition with those in less-developed parts of the globe as corporations routinely shift production offshore in search of ever lower wages and working conditions, creating a downward spiral throughout the entire industry," said Mazur.

Social justice here and abroad

As chairman of the AFL-CIO's Committee on Organizing and International Solidarity, Mazur has responded to the challenges workers are facing in a rapidly changing global economy.



vanized public sentiment for job safety.

The ILGWU and ACTWU in 1993 collaborated to produce the first union contracts for workers in the so-called Free Trade Zones of the Dominican Republic — one of many initiatives aimed at protecting the jobs of workers in North America through fair trade policies and improvement of conditions of workers in the Third World.

The two also have been leaders among the coalition of labor, environmentalists, consumers and others in the fight for the inclusion of worker rights and environmental standards in all trade agreements.

ACTWU negotiated a Code of Conduct with Levi Strauss & Co. and with the Clothing Manufacturers' Association, requiring employers to respect worker rights in plants in the United States and offshore.

ILGWU has worn its immigrant past and present with great pride. The union established a nationwide Immigration Project to legalize union members eligible for amnesty and provide immigration legal services to members and their families.

Working through a unified labor movement, ACTWU and ILGWU played major roles last year in the effort to guarantee health benefits to all Americans through comprehensive health care reform.

"Both of our unions are committed to working in politics and the legislative arena — as well as at the bargaining table and on the picket lines — to improve the lives of working people," said Mazur.

"This is what the historic step is all about — uniting workers in our industry, in the labor movement, in our communities," he said.

Merger to be built on organizing

UNITE, the new Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees, will launch itself with a major organizing drive supported by $10 million earmarked for the effort.

The pending merger of the Ladies' Garment Workers and the Clothing and Textile Workers to form UNITE is expected to give the union a strong, permanent focus on organizing.

"We will be very aggressive with our resources, energy and leadership in terms of our focus on organizing," said ACTWU's Bruce Raynor, who along with ILGWU's Edgar Romney will be an executive vice president of the merged union. "We are confident that we can be a national success."

"Together, we can learn from each other and bring the benefits of unionization to thousands more workers," said Romney.

"We need creative responses to corporate power so that we can raise living standards for workers," added retiring ACTWU President Jack Sheinkman. "This means aggressive organizing, new forms of labor-management relations and strategic targeting of resources."

The merged union, comprising about 200,000 current ACTWU members and 155,000 ILGWU workers, will be especially active in the South, where ACTWU has a large membership, and in the New York-New Jersey metropolitan region, where ILGWU is particularly strong.

"The workers we represent and seek to defend are the face of the new workplace: women, immigrants, minorities and low-wage workers," said ILGWU President Jay Mazur, who will lead the new UNITE. "We will build on traditions of innovation in both unions, including community-based organizing, corporate campaign techniques and international worker solidarity."

Raynor noted that ACTWU, organizing in the traditionally hostile South, has been able to get first contracts in 80 percent to 90 percent of the elections it has won. "We've shown a willingness to stick to it and put in the resources needed to achieve contracts," he said.

ACTWU's legacy of sticking it out was celebrated in the Oscar-winning film, "Norma Rae," based on the true story of a courageous female worker who helped to initiate a 4,000-member organizing drive. The movie reflected union efforts to organize the giant J.P. Stevens plants in the 1970s.

> *"We are confident that we can be a national success."*
>
> **—Bruce Raynor of ACTWU**

ILGWU has had similar success in organizing immigrant workers in major cities. Its Campaign for Justice, a community-based effort launched in 1990 to target sweatshops, now has five Justice Centers in New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco, reaching out to workers in their communities to help them organize and solve workplace problems.

"The skills that ILGWU has in organizing immigrant and urban areas are crucial," said Raynor. "We need their expertise to continue to grow in big cities and in small towns."

The unions are counting on the merger to help them combat the growing challenge of global enterprise.

"The re-emergence of sweatshops and the unbridled union-busting of countless employers, large and small, will be met by a powerful and aggressive organizing drive by UNITE," promised Mazur.

— Muriel H. Cooper



ILGWU joined ACTWU at a 1970s rally in support of the worldwide J.P. Stevens boycott.

UNION NEWS

TCU members vote to strike

Protesting the failure by Grand Trunk Western to negotiate a contract, nearly 500 Transportation Communications Union members have voted to strike.

"Despite 16 negotiating sessions (six with the mediator), the carrier has steadfastly refused to bargain in good faith," said TCU President Robert A. Scardelletti. "Now GTW is threatening to unilaterally impose some of its negotiating demands. It is patently clear that the carrier is stalling and that it has no intention of reaching a negotiated settlement."

After the 93 percent vote for strike, Scardelletti asked the National Mediation Board to release the union from mediation. Last September, TCU declared an impasse and asked for the NMB's assistance after a year had gone by with no progress at the bargaining table.

Job protections is a major issue because of the carrier's attempt to transfer vast amounts of work to its parent (Canadian National), said Scardelletti, who pointed out that GTW tried to get Interstate Commerce Commission approval to circumvent the existing agreement with TCU.

"With that tactic having failed, the Grand Trunk Western is now proceeding with plans to remove work unilaterally," he said. "In this context, further negotiations would serve no purpose except to reward the carrier's dilatory tactics," Scardelletti said.

Michigan elects woman

Detroit

Bertha Louise Poe was elected secretary-treasurer of the Michigan AFL-CIO at the state federation's 21st biennial convention. Delegates also re-elected Frank Garrison for a third term as president.

Poe, who replaced retiring Tom Turner, is the first woman to hold a top leadership role in the state federation. She has served as public relations director for the state AFT.

Delegates approved a number of resolutions, including one in support of workplace safety through MIOSHA — the state safety and health administration that may be on the chopping block if the administration of Republican Gov. John Engler has its way.

Speakers included Tom Donahue, AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer; Robert B. Reich, secretary of labor; Owen Bieber, UAW president; and Gerald W. McEntee, president of AFSCME.

Texas re-elects officers

Austin, Texas

Joe Gunn and Emmett Sheppard were re-elected as president and secretary-treasurer of the Texas AFL-CIO during the 35th biennial convention.

This will be Gunn's third term in office. Sheppard will begin his first full term after replacing Jackie St. Clair in 1993. St. Clair now is the state's employment commissioner.

Playing on the convention theme of "Organize in '95," guest speakers encouraged delegates to become even more active in their fight for worker rights. Speakers included Mine Workers President Richard L. Trumka; Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers President Robert Wages; AFL-CIO COPE Director Richard Walsh; and Ed Feigen, special projects coordinator at the federation's organizing department.

Donahue, Sweeney seek top job

Continued from Page 1

for secretary-treasurer and AFSCME Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson for the new office of executive vice president, which the convention would be asked to create with a constitutional amendment requiring a two-thirds vote.

"When we began this change process more than six months ago, we resolved to reinvigorate the labor movement at every level," Sweeney said in a statement released at the McEntee press conference. "I seek the presidency because I believe passionately in the power of unions to improve the lives of workers and their families."

Like Donahue, Sweeney comes from the New York Service Employees local now called 32-B/32-J, where they worked together. Sweeney, 61, became national president of SEIU in 1980, one year after Donahue was first elected AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer. Donahue, 66, had been first vice president of SEIU and left in 1973 to become executive assistant to AFL-CIO President George Meany.

Kirkland timed his resignation to the opening of the Aug. 1 Executive Council meeting in Chicago. When a vacancy occurs in either AFL-CIO office, the constitution requires an Executive Council meeting to elect a successor.

Donahue said he would be a candidate both for the remainder of Kirkland's term and at the convention for a full two-year term. Donahue deferred a decision on a running mate but said, "I feel strongly that it's time for a woman or a minority candidate."

Kirkland, 73, was elected president of the AFL-CIO in 1979, after he had served 10 years as secretary-treasurer. He joined the AFL-CIO staff in 1948 and worked in the research and Social Security departments before becoming executive assistant to the president in 1961.

"This decision stems from my own personal preferences, as well as my duty to do my best to see that the future direction of the AFL-CIO will be in the hands of one who places the solidarity and best interests of labor as a whole above all other considerations," Kirkland said in a statement. He said he played a role in convincing Donahue "to reconsider his own plans to retire," which Donahue had announced May 8.

Like Sweeney and Donahue, Trumka and Chavez-Thompson are members of the AFL-CIO Executive Council. Trumka, 45, was elected president of the UMWA in 1982 and led its historic reaffiliation with the AFL-CIO in 1987. Chavez-Thompson, 50, has been an AFL-CIO vice president since 1993. She lives in San Antonio and represents a seven-state area as AFSCME vice president.

Clinton, Reich praise Kirkland

Tributes to Lane Kirkland on the announcement of his retirement plans came from the highest quarters.

"American workers — and workers around the world — owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to Lane Kirkland," President Clinton said. "His ideas and accomplishments will benefit working families for generations to come."

The president said Kirkland "served with distinction during some of the toughest times for American workers and brought creativity, a laser-like determination, true grit and an unparalleled intellect to his job."

Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich said that "in an age of greed and privilege for some, Lane stood up for fairness and opportunity for all — and earned a place in the pantheon of American heroes."

In his 16 years at the AFL-CIO helm, Reich noted, Kirkland "unified the house of labor and fought for human and worker rights throughout the world. Perhaps the greatest legacy of his half-century of service is the ferocious battle he waged against the trickle-down policies of the 1980s."

President Clinton, with whom Kirkland worked particularly closely during the 1993-94 battle for health care reform, also said, "Hillary and I wish him the very best for the future, and will always be grateful for his strong support, keen advice and valued friendship."

Conference puts spotlight on young unionists

San Francisco

The importance of young workers to the trade union movement was underscored by more than 50 trade unionists who participated in a Summer Conference for Young Unionists at the University of California at Berkeley.

The conference, sponsored by the AFL-CIO Organizing Institute and Berkeley's Center for Labor Research and Education, included speeches from young trade union leaders, workshops and discussions on issues facing young workers. The trade unionists, aged 20 to 32, represented more than 30 unions.

Unions are important to young people, said 28-year-old Suzanne Doran, a member of the Office and Professional Employees, but it also is "important that my union respond to my experiences as a young worker."

Only 7 percent of workers between the ages of 16 and 24 currently have union representation. The implications are severe, conference coordinator John Sladkus explained in a presentation on the decline of union representation and earnings of young workers.

"Without union representation, workers in this age group earn on average 28 percent less than union workers."

Young people are seeing less opportunity to find jobs that pay well and provide challenges, Sladkus added.

Despite the decline in unionization within every age group, union workers continue to make more money on average than non-union workers, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

"It is surprising how little we know about young workers and what they think about unions," Amy Dean, business manager of the South Bay Central Labor Council, told the conference. "But we must realize they are our future."

Grain Millers steady financial footing, raise per capita

Las Vegas

The Grain Millers made a series of constitutional changes to strengthen the union, including the approval of a one-time 70-cent per capita increase.

The 160 delegates to the union's 24th constitutional convention also agreed to eliminate the position of executive vice president and to change from biennial to quadrennial constitutional conventions.

Under a system already in place, per capita payments increase 30 cents per member per month each year until the union builds up to a $2 million fund. Effective Aug. 1, for payment in September, the per capita will be increased by $1 — the usual 30 cents plus the special increase.

President Larry R. Jackson opened the convention by outlining the critical issues facing AFGM members, noting that the union has had to devote many resources to fight greedy corporations intent on gutting jobs, wages and benefits.

"Of course, fighting — and winning — these battles do not come easily — nor do they come cheap," he said. "We have spent tens of thousands of dollars taking on these corporations. It's difficult to believe that we have to put out so much money to battle greed — but we must.

"If it was your pension plan being raided, if it was your benefits being threatened, and if it was your job on the line, you would want us there," Jackson said. "Let me assure you, the Grain Millers will be there when these circumstances arise."

Jackson urged the delegates to undertake careful deliberation of the changes necessary to ensure a strong and fiscally healthy union as it moves into the 21st century.

"In my opinion, without the passage of financial reform, this organization is doomed to a slow and painful death," he said. "We cannot afford to let that happen."

The delegates also re-elected the union's entire executive board, with one change. Executive Vice President Larry Barber was elected as secretary-treasurer, replacing Howard W. Roe, who retired. It was Barber's previous post that was eliminated by constitutional change.

Barber takes over as secretary-treasurer effective July 1.

In other changes, the union announced it would hold a national education seminar for its locals in 1997 as a means to gather without a constitutional convention. The next convention now will be held in 1999.

The conference would cover such subjects as grievance handling, elections, arbitration training, organizing, negotiating tactics, training of financial secretaries and safety and health issues, Jackson said.

Other speakers included Walt Elliot, president of the Nevada State AFL-CIO; Robert Harbrant of the AFL-CIO Food and Allied Service Trades Department; Charles Mercer of the Union Label and Service Trades Department; and Ken Signoretti, executive vice president of the Ontario Federation of Labor.

UNION NEWS

Janitors on the march

Citicorp and its subsidary Citibank headed the list of enemies exposed in hundreds of rallies and demonstrations from New York to California during Justice for Janitors Day, June 15.

Marking the 10th anniversary of the union's campaign to organize janitorial workers, trade unionists leafleted the company's offices and branches. Citibank was singled out for attention because of its contracting policies for cleaning services at a number of branches in the New York City area.

Other actions against corporate targets were held at the Arden Group in Philadelphia; Atkell Services Inc. in Syracuse, N.Y.; Beverly Hills, Calif., City Hall; and Hewlett-Packard offices in Northern California, Corvallis, Ore., and Denver. Additional rallies and demonstrations were held at CB Commercial in Seattle; at Tri-C Community College in Cleveland; Marine Midland Bank in New York City; and in Washington, D.C., where the target was real estate developer Oliver Carr.

June 15 was chosen to commemorate a demonstration that the union held that day in 1990 at Century City office complex in Los Angeles, where police confronted demonstrators. Several people were injured and hospitalized in the melee, which resulted in public pressure that prodded the company to recognize the union.

Oklahoma City grant set

The U.S. Department of Labor is providing an emergency grant of $800,000 to the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission to create temporary jobs to help clean up and restore public facilities and lands damaged in the bombing of the Oklahoma City Federal Building.

The grant, authorized by Title III of the Job Training Partnership Act, will create approximately 100 jobs. The temporary jobs, up to six months in duration, will be provided to workers who have been laid off as a result of the bombing, as well as to other dislocated workers.

Oklahoma residents who lost their jobs as a direct result of the bombing also may be eligible for unemployment insurance or disaster unemployment assistance.

Fire Fighters disavow rally

The Fire Fighters disavowed plans by volunteer fire fighters to demonstrate near the White House June 10 to protest the nation's wage-and-hour law.

The volunteers were protesting a statute that ensures that paid, professional fire fighters are compensated for every hour they work. Federal law protects employees from being coerced into working for their employer "off the clock" for free.

The volunteers want to change the law to exempt only paid, professional fire fighters from the law.

Textile film due June 27

Trade unionists will gather in houses, union halls, libraries and community centers across the country to watch the "Uprising of '34," a one-hour documentary on the General Textile Strike of 1934, under the Labor-to-Neighbor project.

The strike involved 500,000 workers, half of them southern, who challenged a system of control that had shaped the life of cotton mill communities for decades.

The program will air on Public Broadcasting Service stations June 27. Unionists interested in participating in group viewing should contact their union's education department, or call 800/786-1767 to register with the Labor-to-Neighbor project. Check local television listings for the broadcast time.

Food drive hits record

More than 44.4 million pounds of non-perishable food donations were collected by Letter Carriers in the union's third National Food Drive.

The 44,488,226 pounds eclipsed the 32-million-pound record set by the union last year. More than 1,120 local branches of the union conducted the drive in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands and then delivered the food to local food banks, pantries and shelters.

The drive was conducted in partnership with the AFL-CIO, U.S. Postal Service and the United Way of America.



Dick Blin/UPIU

Rubber Workers and Steelworkers leaflet outside a Nashville, Tenn., Bridgestone/Firestone store to expose the company's union-busting tactics. The unions, which are preparing for a merger vote, have assigned 100 organizers all across the United States to demonstrate in more than 100 cities for an intensive public campaign. The campaign includes an AFL-CIO national boycott against Bridgestone/Firestone tires.

ICFTU scores U.S. labor laws

By David Kameras

Inadequate U.S. labor laws protect neither the right to strike nor the right of workers to organize trade unions, according to a new report on the state of worker rights worldwide.

"The law is unable to protect workers when the employer is determined to destroy or prevent trade union representation," stated the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions' Trade Union Rights Survey.

The report identifies abuses of trade union rights in a record 98 countries, thanks in part to tensions governing global trade.

"Increased trade wars between countries and international economic policies have had a disastrous effect on workers and on those whom they have chosen to defend their interests," the world's largest trade union organization said.

The United States has contributed to this bleak picture in a number of ways, the report said, including:

- The slowness of procedures under the National Labor Relations Board.
- The intimidating effects when 25 percent of employers fire workers who try to form a union.
- Double standards that permit employers but not unions to use company time and premises to campaign.
- Lengthy delays caused by frequent challenges by employers of union election victories.
- Restrictions on partial strikes, intermittent strikes, secondary boycotts, other forms of mutual aid and various kinds of on-the-job activity, while employers can impose terms, lock out workers, transfer work to another location or a non-union entity and hire permanent replacements.
- Exclusion of large categories of workers, including agricultural and domestic workers, security guards, certain kinds of "supervisory" workers, "independent contractors" and approximately 40 percent of state and local public-sector workers.

The report cited the closure by Sprint of a subsidiary eight days before a union election, the inability of workers at Borg-Warner's Pony Express to achieve a contract, and the use of striker replacements at Bridgestone/Firestone, Diamond Walnut and the Frontier Hotel in Las Vegas as examples in which unfair labor practices were prevalent.

Murders of trade unionists numbered 528 assassinations in 17 countries, notably in Algeria (more than 300) and Colombia (176). "Most killings occurred as trade unionists were negotiating improvements in pay and working conditions," the ICFTU said.

In addition, female workers, particularly young women, who make up the majority of workers in free trade zones now proliferating throughout the world, "are increasingly the object of violence or ill treatment."

While abuses in developing countries tend to get more attention, "a new trend of transferring increasing power to the uncontrolled and unbridled free-market forces and the large financial trusts that control them, often with the collaboration of local political leaders, is generating more subtle and often more effective repression of unions," said ICFTU Secretary General Bill Jordan.

"The role of the trade unions has never been more relevant," he said. "In an age when the globalization of trade is shaping the world, trade unions have to make sure that where trade goes, freedom and decent conditions go too."

CWA, IBEW gain new AT&T contract

Continued from Page 1

minimum pension benefit raised to $400 a month.

The contract also includes:

- Increased access to available jobs by workers who are laid off or facing a facility closing.
- Increased funding for the jointly owned training alliance to $67 million.
- Establishment of a joint education and information process to introduce union concepts in non-union locations. This initiative also included a code of conduct for organizing campaigns and an agreement by AT&T not to hire anti-union consultants in campaigns.
- Establishment of an association fee deduction process at AT&T Global Information Solutions (formerly NCR), an unorganized entity.

CWA, which represents 90,000 AT&T workers, and IBEW, which represents another 20,000, bargained jointly on the national level. Although workers had authorized a strike, talks continued after the May 27 contract expirations. The unions made no plans and did not set a deadline for a strike.

"We assessed progress in the talks as they went along," CWA spokesman Jeff Miller said.

At the local issues tables, CWA and IBEW bargained jointly with AT&T for manufacturing units, and supplemental agreements also were in the works at CWA- and IBEW-represented manufacturing plants. There were several other local bargaining tables covering CWA members as well.

Elsewhere, CWA members also will vote June 27 on a tentative agreement with NYNEX on a first contract for 1,500 residence service and clerical workers who gained union representation last fall.

The agreement would extend to NYNEX employees in Massachusetts, Vermont and Maine the wage, benefit and job security improvements negotiated last year by CWA and IBEW in the national contract.

It also addresses specific job security concerns in the unit. NYNEX is consolidating the 23 worksites into five offices over the next three years. Under the agreement, none of the employees in the unit will be laid off due to the restructuring. Instead, all employees will be offered an early retirement incentive.

ECONOMY

Jobs decline points to economic slowdown

By David Kameras

Employment took a nosedive in May, with large declines in construction and manufacturing contributing to a loss of 101,000 non-farm payroll jobs. Losses also were posted in government and retail and wholesale trade.

Although the official unemployment rate actually improved slightly, moving from 5.8 percent to 5.7 percent, the labor force participation rate dropped by 900,000 workers.

"If these people had been counted as unemployed, unemployment would be 6.4 percent rather than 5.7 percent," said Rudy Oswald, the AFL-CIO's chief economist. Even allowing for seasonal factors, "the data imply a worsening of unemployment rather than an improvement."

At the same time, weekly hours of work fell by 0.3 to 34.3 hours, "a strong indication of a move toward a recession," Oswald said. Combined with the first drop in average hourly earnings in a long time, seasonally adjusted earnings fell nearly $4 a week.

"The decline in employment affected more than half of the 356 detailed industries for which data are collected," he said. "This broad decline is the sharpest since the 1991 recession, except for January 1992."

According to the Challenger Employment Report, which tracks job cutbacks, May had the highest number of reported layoffs since January 1994, led by 25,000 positions being cut by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. Other large announced cuts included BellSouth Corp. (11,000), CNA Financial Corp. (6,000) and Mobil Oil Corp. (4,700).

"Although we expected to see a steady flow of job cuts throughout the year, the May figure is disconcerting because it flies in the face of recent trends away from massive layoffs," the report said.

The breadth of the economic slowdown was evident in the diversity of affected industries and the variety of regions as well. Some 6,000 GTE workers laid off at 110 sites in 21 states will benefit from a $4.8 million Labor Department grant that was requested by the Communications Workers, Electrical Workers and GTE.

CWA President Morton Bahr called the move a "recognition by this administration of the human hardship caused by corporate downsizing and the need to invest in retraining workers for the high-skill, high-wage jobs of the future."

"The loss of jobs at GTE Telephone Operations is another example of the shifting tides that are affecting the global economy," added IBEW President John J. Barry. "We believe that the only responsible course of action is this kind of retraining and placement effort to allow affected workers to take control of their futures."

In another sign of the times, the Boeing Co. announced it will eliminate a total of 12,000 jobs in 1995, 6,000 more than previously announced. While the new reductions do not represent further cuts among members of Machinists District Lodge 751, the move reinforces the union's determination to seek job security provisions when a new contract is negotiated later this year.

"To still produce an airplane, they can't go much lower," said Connie Kelliher, a spokeswoman for the union.

Although 7.5 million people were officially unemployed in May, their numbers reached 13.5 million affected by total or partial unemployment when joined with 1.5 million discouraged workers and 4.5 million working part time for economic reasons.

"The picture is generally much more dismal than the basic number implies," Oswald said.

From April to May, unemployment rose for adult men (4.9 percent to 5.1 percent), teenagers (17.5 percent to 17.6 percent), white teenagers (13.8 percent to 14.3 percent) and Hispanics (8.8 percent to 10 percent). The employment picture improved for adult women (5.2 percent to 4.8 percent), African-Americans (10.7 percent to 9.9 percent) and African-American teenagers (35.8 percent to 30.5 percent) and remained steady for whites (5 percent).

Of 11 large states, unemployment rose in California (7.9 percent to 8.5 percent), New Jersey (6.3 percent to 6.5 percent), Ohio (4.5 percent to 4.7 percent) and Texas (5.9 percent to 6 percent). It fell in Florida (5.6 percent to 5.1 percent), Illinois (5.7 percent to 5.5 percent), Massachusetts (5.9 percent to 5 percent), Michigan (5.8 percent to 5.7 percent), New York (6.8 percent to 6.3 percent), North Carolina (4.7 percent to 4.3 percent) and Pennsylvania (5.8 percent to 5.7 percent).



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

UAW Legislative Director Alan Reuther: "Fair trade must be a two-way street . . . the time for talk is past."

Sanctions against Japan win support

Angry trade unionists demonstrated June 8 in support of President Clinton's plan to impose sanctions in an effort to open the world's second-largest market for autos and auto parts.

"We have been negotiating for 25 years," declared Alan Reuther, legislative director for the UAW. "Japan has stonewalled for too long on this issue.

"Fair trade must be a two-way street," Reuther maintained. "We can no longer accept a situation where the U.S. market is open to Japanese automotive products, but their market remains closed to cars, trucks and auto parts built by American workers.

"The UAW does not seek a trade war," he said. "Our objective is a negotiated agreement that will result in fair trade in autos and auto parts.

"The time for talk is past. The time for action is now," he said.

Japan uses an array of non-tariff trade barriers, including manufacturer-dealer cartels and overly rigorous inspection requirements pegged to "authorized" repair shops, that effectively preclude a significant American presence in the home market.

To illustrate the effect these practices have, Rep. Sander Levin (D-Mich.) held up a universal joint he bought for $11.46 from Joe's Auto Parts in Royal Oak, Mich. The same part costs $105 in Japan.

"This kind of imbalance shortchanges American workers and companies and it shortchanges Japanese consumers," Levin said.

"All I'm saying to the Japanese is, 'Let us compete in your markets as you can compete in our markets,'" he said. "Let it be a two-way street."

Andrew H. Card Jr., president of the American Automobile Manufacturers Association, likened U.S.-Japan auto trade to a track meet, "only we're not competing in the same event. Japanese cars and trucks make a mad dash into the U.S. market, while U.S. vehicles have to jump the high hurdles to break into Japan's."

A recent poll indicates that 71 percent of Americans back the administration's plan to double tariffs on Japanese-made luxury cars.

Later in the day, Reuther testified before Congress, indicating that 500,000 good-paying American jobs would be created if Japan would put an end to its discriminatory trade practices.

— David Kameras

Real earnings plunge despite low inflation

The beleaguered American worker found it even harder to make ends meet in May as real average weekly earnings fell 1.2 percent.

Contributing to the drop in buying power was a 0.2 percent increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI-W), coupled with a 0.9 percent decline in average weekly hours worked.

Before seasonal adjustment and CPI deflation, average weekly earnings in May were $390.68, compared with $385.93 a year earlier.

The pain is not limited to hourly workers. Recent surveys indicate that 1985 salary increases are averaging 3.6 percent, a six-year low, while chief executive pay rose by 11.4 percent last year.

Adjusted price increases were recorded in energy (0.7 percent), transportation (0.4 percent), entertainment (0.4 percent), medical care (0.3 percent), housing (0.2 percent) and food and beverages (0.1 percent). Prices dropped 0.5 percent for apparel and upkeep.

Finished goods prices, a predicter of future consumer prices, were unchanged in May, after a 0.5 percent jump in April.

Declines in food (0.6 percent) and energy (0.2 percent) prices helped to largely offset a 0.3 percent increase in other items.

"Inflation seems to be well under control," said Dean Baker of the Economic Policy Institute. The producer price report "provides no basis to assume that there are inflationary pressures in the pipeline that will be passed on to consumers in coming months. If anything, with the economy clearly weakening, the pressures on prices seem to be downward."

DATA

Unemployment Rate	
May	5.7 percent
From April	-0.1 percent
Real Earnings	
May	-1.2 percent
From May '94	-2.0 percent
Consumer Prices (CPI-W)	
May	+0.2 percent
May '94-May '95	+3.2 percent
Producer Prices	
May	Unchanged

Child labor fight runs up against Indian subterfuge

By Muriel H. Cooper

The Indian government has launched a "counter-offensive to kill the RUGMARK labeling initiative," the Child Labor Coalition charged after India said it would require carpet manufacturers to end child labor.

India's plan to have the industry-run Carpet Export Promotion Council (CEPC) monitor itself to assure child labor compliance is a sham, said Linda Golodner, co-chair of the CLC, which includes labor, consumer and religious groups. No provisions would be made to educate or rehabilitate displaced child workers.

This is in sharp contrast to RUGMARK, which has independent compliance monitoring by trained individuals. Moreover, RUGMARK works with UNICEF and other non-governmental organizations to provide rehabilitation and education for displaced child workers, who could end up on the streets.

Golodner described India's plan as "an attempt to calm the growing international outcry against exploitative child labor in the carpet industry."

India also has sought to silence its internal critics, including child labor opponent Kailash Satyarthi, chair of the South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude (SACCS). Satyarthi was jailed June 2 and charged with slander against a rug manufacturer after appearing in a German documentary film on child labor. He was released on bond and will face a hearing in July.

The CLC is seeking government protections for Satyarthi, whose cause also is being championed in India by the AFL-CIO's Asian-American Free Labor Institute. Satyarthi has been the target of repeated harassment by authorities and has received death threats for his work.

"We are concerned about Satyarthi's personal safety and that he is afforded due process under the Indian law," said Golodner. Even prior to his arrest, Satyarthi received several death threats. Reps. Bernard Sanders (I-Vt.) and George E. Brown (D-Calif.) expressed their "profound concern for the well-being and safety" of Satyarthi in a letter to Indian Ambassador H. E. Siddhartha Shankar Ray.

"There is strong reason to suspect that a handful of unscrupulous carpet merchants and exporters may be implicated in Kailash's arrest and may be plotting to harm Kailash and other SACCS officials as part of a misguided effort to curtail their work on behalf of millions of defenseless child workers throughout South Asia," they said.

In Pakistan, meanwhile, police arrested three workers from the Bonded Labor Liberation Front, a coalition struggling to end child labor practices. Also detained were 13 relatives of Iqbal Masih, a child rights activist who was assassinated in Pakistan on Easter Sunday.

Boycott pressure in Bangladesh

The CLC continues its efforts for an agreement with the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association to end child labor practices. The coalition has threatened to mount a boycott against BGMEA products without the agreement, which was previously negotiated with AAFLI, UNICEF and other non-governmental organizations.

The coalition has appealed to importers and retailers who have codes of conduct banning products produced by child labor, to encourage BGMEA to sign the memorandum of understanding.

"As your company has taken a stand on the issue of child labor, support of the MOU is a natural progression of your commitment," said the CLC in a letter to Wal-Mart, Nordstroms, Kmart, Sears, J.C. Penney, May, Hudson, Levi Strauss & Co., Woolworth, Mervyn's and Target.

The negotiated agreement calls for 12- and 13-year-old children to be withdrawn gradually from the work force while employers provide part-time education and part-time work, with the immediate withdrawal of children under 12 to schools provided by a joint committee of BGMEA and UNICEF.

Before the plans were complete, the BGMEA backed out of the proposed agreement.

Now, under the threat of a boycott and with added pressure from the Bangladesh government, the BGMEA agreed to reconsider, said CLC spokesperson Darlene Adkins.



Michael Byrne/AFL-CIO News

Media training on honing your message and delivery was one of three workshops at the 1995 AFL-CIO regional conferences. Here Candice Johnson of the Information Department questions Eugene Didier of the AFT on camera at the Orlando, Fla., event, the third stop on the four-city tour. The two other workshops covered legislative and political affairs and full participation, the effort to find ways to bring more women and minorities into union leadership. Demonstrations also were given on computerized tracking for organizing, the LaborNET communications system and the new AFL-CIO "home page" on the Internet.

NEWSMAKERS

Dagoberto Gilb, a Carpenter who brings working-class life to print, and labor troubadour **Pete Seeger** will be among the headliners at the three-day Great Labor Arts Exchange Festival. The free festival will be held June 25-27 at the George Meany Center in Silver Spring, Md. The festival also will include a one-man show about storied Mine Workers President **John L. Lewis**. For more information, call 202/842-7880.

Brian McLaughlin was elected president of the New York City AFL-CIO following the resignation June 15 of **Thomas Van Arsdale**. McLaughlin was a long-time assistant to Van Arsdale's predecessor, **Harry Van Arsdale Jr.**, and currently is a New York state assemblyman. Van Arsdale will remain treasurer and business manager of Electrical Workers Local 3.

AWARDS

Mine Workers President **Richard L. Trumka** received the Massachusetts AFL-CIO Gompers-Murray-Meany Award, given to a unionist "who exemplifies the spirit of true trade unionism."

The Americans for Democratic Action will honor **Ken Young**, former AFL-CIO legislative director and executive assistant to the president, former UAW officer and Detroit activist **Mildred Jeffrey** and Rep. **John Lewis** (D-Ga.) during the ADA's 48th annual convention. "From organizing workers for the CIO's Insurance and Allied Workers to lobbying Congress, Ken made it happen," said the AFL-CIO. All three were involved in the struggles that led to passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and are widely known as champions of the poor, minorities and other disadvantaged groups.

Members of **AFGE Local 1992** were chosen to compete as one of three finalists in the 12th Annual U.S. Senate Productivity and Quality Award for Virginia. The award is used as a mechanism for sharing information and knowledge about quality and productivity improvement, as well as a process to recognize exemplary performance in both the public and private sectors.

CORRECTION

The convention of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers will be held at the Westin Renaissance Center in Detroit July 15-20, 1996, not this year, as previously reported.

— Compiled by Muriel H. Cooper

RESOURCES

WETA-TV, a Washington, D.C., public broadcasting station that is producing a 90-minute television documentary on the life of **A. Philip Randolph**, is looking for visuals, memorabilia and artifacts relating to Randolph's life and career. The producer also would like to interview people about their experiences with Randolph. Contact Averi Livingston, WETA-TV coordinating producer, P.O. Box 2626, Washington, D.C. 20013; or call collect at 703/998-2705.

PUBLICATIONS

The following publications are available from the AFL-CIO Department of Economic Research, 815 16th St. N.W., Room 209, Washington, D.C. 20006: **Slash and Burn: The 1995 Republican Budget Resolution** is a booklet that highlights the major undermining of economic and social programs of the FY'95 budget; **Unemployment Still a Problem After 4 Years of Economic Recovery** documents unemployment in the U.S. today; and **The Flat Tax, If You're Not Rich, It Will Flatten Your Wallet** describes the regressive nature of the proposed flat tax.

The AFL-CIO Department of Education's **1995 Leadership Manual Current Issues** includes information on labor issues, the AFL-CIO's Stand UP campaign, and labor and the political process. Copies are available from the Department of Education, 815 16th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

The Steelworkers have produced a booklet listing 23 categories of union products ranging from apparel to appliances, foods, furniture, lawn and pet products, stereo equipment and toys. Contact the Steelworkers, Membership Development Department, No. 5 Gateway Center, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15222.

Brand Name Directory of Products Made by ACTWU Members lists products ranging from clothing to athletic and office equipment made by the Clothing and Textile Workers. Contact ACTWU, Industrial Dept., 15 Union Square, New York, N.Y. 10003.

The George Meany Center for **Labor Studies Catalog 1995-1996** describes information on courses, center activities and college and master's degree programs. Contact the center at 202/431-6400.

CONFERENCES

The A. Philip Randolph Institute's **26th Annual National Education Conference** will be held June 28 through July 1 at the Hyatt Regency in Chicago. Contact APRI at 202/289-2774.

The **19th Annual Labor Studies Summer School**, sponsored by the Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations, will be held July 9-14 in Ithaca, N.Y. Contact Cathy Mooney at 607/255-4423 or Robin Burke at 607/255-5840.

VIDEO

Abandon Ship? America's Merchant Marine Dilemma is a 12-minute video about the competitive difficulties facing the nation's shipping and shipbuilding industries. Contact the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO, 815 16th St. N.W., Suite 510, Washington, D.C. 20006.

Worker Rights in Trade

Los Derechos de los Trabajadores y el Comercio

AFL-CIO NEWS

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Labor summit examines trade

By David Kameras

Chile has been officially invited to join a Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA), lending new urgency to labor's campaign to have worker rights included in current trade negotiations.

Labor leaders from throughout the hemisphere will make that case at an Inter-American Labor Summit June 28-29 in Denver, which will assess regional problems of worker rights and economic integration. A conference statement will be presented to a June 30 meeting of trade and finance ministers from throughout the Americas.

Labor's priorities, as generally defined in the draft statement, include:

- The inclusion of worker rights and labor standards in the hemispheric trade negotiations.
- The creation of a permanent intergovernmental structure that includes worker representatives as part of the ongoing FTAA process.
- The strengthening of structures within each country and subregional trading group to assure a worker voice on economic integration.

The inclusion of worker rights in trade agreements is not a new or partisan concept. "Every U.S. president starting with President Eisenhower — Republicans and Democrats — has talked about trying to get the (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) at that time, and now the World Trade Organization, to begin to address the issue of worker rights and trade, and how they intersect and how each affect each other," noted U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor at a recent international trade conference.

Such issues as freedom of association, the right to bargain collectively and the prohibition of child, prison and slave labor need to be addressed, he said.

Worker rights provisions would help prevent multinationals from playing one country against another, with weaker countries underbidding their neighbors, and would help create a stable economic environment built upon long-term investment.

"Without worker rights in the equation, more and more power is consolidated in the hands of ruling and corporate elites," said Mark Anderson, director of the AFL-CIO Task Force on Trade. "Provisions that establish protections for worker rights would ensure that social conditions improve as trade expands."

The problems with NAFTA

Labor leaders are trying to fend off a repeat of the experience with the North American Free Trade Agreement, which has seen a meltdown of the Mexican currency, a free fall in real earnings for Mexican workers and evaporation of the U.S. trade surplus with that country.

An estimated 500,000 to 700,000 Mexicans have lost their jobs since the peso devaluation, a number expected to double before the end of the year. Those still working do so at the risk of life and limb, as approximately 30 percent of Mexican businesses do not comply with occupational safety and health standards, according to the government's own estimates.

The recession south of the border and allegations of electoral fraud prompted 3,000 peasants to shut down Mexico's stock market last month, blocking traders from entering or leaving for nearly two hours.

"These are the ones who are bleeding this country dry while the poor are hungry and sick," one demonstrator said.

While Mexican workers are unable to afford U.S.-made goods, the number of U.S. workers who have applied for NAFTA trade adjustment assistance has topped 50,000. The actual number of those affected by NAFTA, however, is thought to be much higher.

"The job loss documented here represents only the tip of the iceberg of NAFTA job loss," said Lori Wallach, director of Public Citizen's Trade Group.

A University of Maryland study predicts NAFTA-related job losses in this country will approach 250,000.

"This confirms our worst fears about NAFTA," said Sen. Byron Dorgan (D-N.D.), a leading NAFTA critic. "The prognosticators were dead wrong. The United States is the big loser under NAFTA."

The boom along the U.S.-Mexican border, polluted enough to be dubbed by The Wall Street Journal as "a 1,000-mile-long Love Canal," likely will lead to nearly 2,250 maquiladora plants by the end of 1996.

Yet, because of the weak enforcement provisions contained in NAFTA's labor side agreement, workers there will continue to be exploited by large corporations based throughout the industrialized world.

In one high-profile case, the United States has complained to Mexico about interference by Sony Corp. in efforts to form an independent union by workers at five Mexican plants. Management, in collusion with the government-dominated official labor federation, allegedly instigated firings, demotions, surveillance, on-the-job harassment and police violence.

It was the first time since NAFTA went into effect that a government has requested consultations, which is the toughest action allowable under the side agreement.

The opportunity of FTAA

The unanimity among hemispheric trade unionists on the need for worker rights provisions in trade agreements helps to make the proposed FTAA an opportunity to make workers' voices heard. The AFL-CIO will be raising that voice in every possible forum, including the U.S. Congress, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue said.

"The issue is going to be tested in the fast-track legislative fight on Chile, on Chile's inclusion in the NAFTA and the enlargement of that," he predicted to reporters on June 12.

The House Ways and Means Committee has scheduled a markup for June 20 that likely will include legislation to provide the administration with "fast-track" authority to negotiate a new trade agreement. Under fast-track rules, no member may amend a pact before the entire body votes up or down on the entire package. No timetable has yet been established for action by the Senate.

Supplementing the efforts of labor, a number of organizations have sent a letter to the heads of state of the four countries preparing to negotiate the FTAA, urging that labor, human rights and environmental issues be prioritized in the multilateral talks.

The letter, drafted by the Alliance for Responsible Trade, Action Canada Network, Red Chile de Accion por una Iniciativa de los Pueblos and Red Mexicana de Accion frente al Libre Comercio, warned that statements by U.S. officials "indicate that the U.S. will seek only limited and inadequate protections for workers and the environment."

The groups also pointed at the Mexican crisis as an example of the risks inherent in overdependence on foreign capital.

"Pressure has been exerted on the Chilean government to eliminate current restrictions on the flow of such capital and on the repatriation of profits on foreign investments generally, measures that would increase the possibility of a similar crisis in Chile," they warned.

Architects of the FTAA envision negotiations eventually moving beyond Chile to other South American and Central American countries. That prospect concerns trade unionists preparing for the Denver conference.

Participants in the summit will include representatives of the Inter-American Regional Organization of Workers (ORIT), the Andean Labor Council, and leading trade union organizations from Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, United States, Uruguay and Venezuela.

Donahue will lead the U.S. delegation and will make welcoming and closing remarks. Other speakers include ORIT General Secretary Luis Anderson and Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich, as well as Mickey Kantor.

INSIDE



Kirkland to retire

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue and Service Employees President John J. Sweeney announce their candidacies to succeed Lane Kirkland as president of the federation. **Page 1.**

ORGANIZING

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UNION NEWS

5 *UAW elects Yokich as new president*

UNION YES

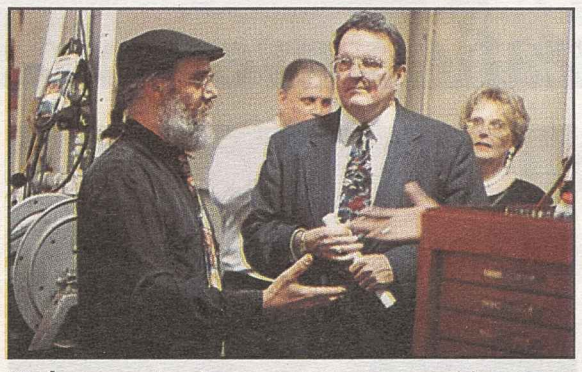
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AFL-CIO NEWS

VOLUME 40, NUMBER 14 JULY 3, 1995



Workers are developing innovation in public sevice. **See FOCUS, Page 5.**

Labor mobilizes, puts heat on Congress

By Mike Hall

The AFL-CIO will turn up the heat on Congress by extending its grass-roots reach into 30 congressional districts, turning up the volume as well with an expanded buy of television and radio commercials.

"This is the newest and biggest of the efforts thus far in the AFL-CIO campaign to Stand UP for America's working families," said AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue at a press conference kicking off the campaign.

"But the idea behind this July 4 effort is by no means new — and it's a continuation of our efforts to ensure that members of Congress have ample opportunity to hear from working Americans in their districts — and not just from the corporate lobbyists," he said.

Along with the media campaign, more AFL-CIO coordinators are being sent to additional selected districts, where they will work with state and local AFL-CIOs, local unions, legislative action committees and allied groups to organize a variety of activities.

Those activities will include LAC meetings, direct mail efforts, job-site leafletting, special phone call drives using the AFL-CIO's toll-free hotline, petition drives, attendance at town meetings, letters-to-the-editor and op-ed pieces.

The media campaign will go into 20 of the 30 districts, with TV ads in six regional areas and local radio ads in 12 markets that cover 14 congressional districts. TV ads also will appear nationally on CNN, CNBC and in the Washington, D.C., market. Radio ads also will run on the syndicated Jim Hightower commentaries.

The ads focus on preserving the American dream

Continued on Page 3



Tom Johnson

Some 4,000 union members and their allies marched in support of striking and locked-out workers in Decatur, Ill. About 7 percent of the town's work force is out of work because of disputes with three foreign-owned companies. Workers marched from each plant, meeting at the rally site. **See UNION NEWS, Page 7.**

OSHA dismantling spurs union alarm

By Colleen M. O'Neill

Labor went on the offensive in the fight for job safety and health with a slashing attack at congressional forces intent on tearing down worker protections.

Legislation introduced by Rep. Cass Ballenger (R-N.C.) would be more accurately described as "the Workplace Death and Injury Enhancement Act (DIE Act)," AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue told the Economic and Educational Opportunities subcommittee on work force protections June 20.

"That's exactly what it will do. The bill changes the fundamental purpose of the OSHAct from preventing workplace injuries and deaths to investigating those tragedies after the fact," he said. "It turns OSHA into a consultant to employers rather than a protector of workers."

Ballenger's bill, H.R. 1834, would cut substantially the resources and powers of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. The hearing was the first held on the legislation by the subcommittee, which is chaired by Ballenger.

At a second hearing a week later, the Clinton administration weighed in against the legislation, as did Robert A. Georgine, president of the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department.

Attending both sessions were approximately 120 Mine Workers, many traveling to Washington from Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Ohio. Although they were not allowed to testify, they protested Ballenger's plan to eliminate the Mine Safety and Health Administration.

Among the bill's major shortcomings, AFL-CIO Occupational Safety and Health Director Peg Seminario said, is that it seeks to treat every employer and nearly every offense the same way.

Relatively responsible employers with good safety records would be treated the same as horrific employers who view workers' lives and limbs as just another business cost, she said.

Under the bill, MSHA and its standards would be folded into OSHA. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, the federal agency responsible for job safety research, would be eliminated altogether.

"The legislative proposal before us today is not designed to address concerns about alleged excessive detail of regulations or the occasional citation for less

Continued on Page 4

Easterling, Trumka vie; candidates stress organizing

By Rex Hardesty

Barbara Easterling of the Communications Workers will be the candidate for AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer running with Tom Donahue, facing Richard L. Trumka of the Mine Workers on the slate headed by John J. Sweeney of the Service Employees.

Donahue, the AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer now running for president, introduced Easterling, 61, to reporters June 22, calling her "a superbly qualified and experienced trade unionist and also a pioneer and role model for trade union women." She has been CWA secretary-treasurer since 1992.

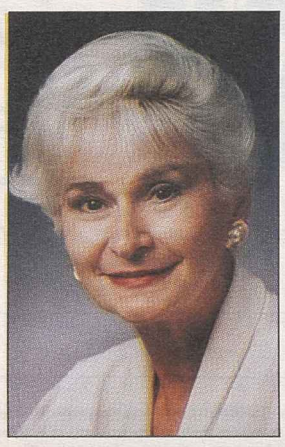
Sweeney, at a June 28 rally, introduced the slate that was announced June 13 by AFSCME President Gerald W. McEntee: Trumka, 45, for secretary-treasurer, and AFSCME Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson, 50, for executive vice president, a new office that would have to be created by the AFL-CIO convention in October.

Sweeney called Trumka and Chavez-Thompson "two of the best things that ever happened to the labor movement." Trumka has been president of the Mine Workers since 1982 and Chavez-Thompson became an AFSCME vice president in 1988.

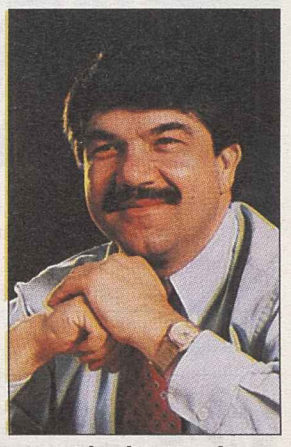
Except for Easterling, all of the candidates are currently members of the AFL-CIO Executive Council. Donahue heads the AFL-CIO finance, foreign trade and evolution of work committees; Sweeney chairs health care and organizing and Trumka heads strategic approaches.

Donahue told reporters the first order of business

Continued on Page 8



Barbara Easterling



Richard L. Trumka

ORGANIZING

IUE gains Trailmobile

Workers at Trailmobile in Jonesboro, Ark., voted to join the Electronic Workers by a 154-131 vote in a National Labor Relations Board election.

Workplace safety was a major issue in the campaign at Trailmobile, a manufacturer of dry box trailers. Workers suffering back injury and carpal tunnel syndrome were routinely put back on the same assignments. Those who missed more than two days of work in a quarter were disqualified from a profit-sharing bonus.

"The in-plant committee showed unusual courage in the struggle to establish a union," said Ronnie Crider, an IUE representative who headed the campaign. "They were even threatened with bodily harm and many were afraid they would lose their jobs."

3rd time charm for OCAW

The Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers will represent some 130 workers at Associated Natural Gas, Inc. (ANGI) and two of its subsidiaries.

The victory, by a 66-57 margin, marks the union's third effort in six years to organize the workers in the predominantly non-union area of northeastern Colorado.

Key issues for workers included deteriorating health and safety conditions, including training in handling hazardous materials, comp time, job security and lack of a voice in the workplace.

Pilots win at FloridaGulf

Pilots at FloridaGulf Airlines voted overwhelmingly for union representation by the Air Line Pilots.

After the 249-37 vote, announced by the National Mediation Board, ALPA said it would immediately seek contract negotiations with the company.

FloridaGulf, a division of Mesa Air Group, is a regional carrier serving the eastern and southeastern states. ALPA represents 43,000 airline pilots at 35 airlines.

IBT, IAM fly Jetstream

The Teamsters and Machinists both won elections to represent fleet service workers and mechanics at Jetstream International Airlines, a subsidiary of USAir.

Ninety-four of the 182 eligible workers voted for the IBT, while IAM won 62 of the 118 eligible votes, the National Mediation Board said. Under NMB procedures, 50 percent plus one of the eligible employees must vote for the union to gain representation rights.

Jetstream pilots last year voted for representation by the Air Line Pilots, but ALPA has conducted informational picketing to protest lack of progress in contract talks.

NLRB orders posting

The National Labor Relations Board said Elsinore Aircraft must quit bullying its workers in their attempt to organize.

The board found that Elsinore had violated federal labor laws by undermining a Teamster representation election and intimidating and firing pro-union employees.

Elsinore now must post a notice informing the workers of their rights. The company also can't promote "snitches" who inform management about other employees' union activities. The NLRB has ordered a new election for next month.

Shanker: Privatization oversold

Popular programs stifle cooperation, says AFT

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

Labor-management cooperation in the education arena is being undermined by managers who guard the bottom line more zealously than they do the education of children, AFT President Albert Shanker told the Secretary of Labor's Task Force on Excellence in State and Local Government through Labor-Management Cooperation.

"We have tried vouchers and privatization and that didn't work," Shanker testified. "But school districts are buying this, newspapers are praising it and a lot of politicians profit by saying they saved the government money."

Pointing to the privatization of Baltimore public schools, Shanker noted that test scores fell under Education Alternatives Inc. Still, the city of Hartford, Conn., hired EAI despite the evidence that the private firm was not helping students.

"Private firms are rewarded for saving money, and some can even keep the money they save city governments, but they have no incentive to produce results," he said.

Shanker pointed out that students in the United States are behind Japan, Germany and France in math, reading and science. Those countries have public school systems with national standards established by the governments.

The United States should look at what its competitors are doing, Shanker declared. "No country has ever done vouchers," he said. "Another problem is we test kids for (scholastic) aptitude instead of achievement, while teachers test for achievement in the classroom."

"We need a national standard and textbooks that follow these standards," he said.

Shanker pointed to the politics of education as a villain in the effort by teachers to improve labor-management cooperation and, ultimately, student performance. Very few of the 15,500 U.S. school superintendents can be effective because they are constantly fighting to keep their jobs, he said.

"It's hard to find one good superintendent because they practice defensive management," said the AFT president. "They won't buck the school board because they are hired by the school board. The school board has a vested interest to fight the superintendent and the superintendent fights the teachers."



AFT's Shanker: "We need a national standard."

The only end result is "they all stay in the papers," he concluded. "Everybody's always running for office."

Teachers and their union also have a major problem — the absence of a federal public employee collective bargaining law, Shanker noted. Without such a law, collective bargaining is caught up in this political process.

"We need an acceptance on the part of American people that bargaining rights are the same for public- and private-sector workers," he added. "Relationship with management is difficult without a set of rules."

The task force also addressed the issues of finance, budget and pensions. Harold Schaitberger, executive assistant to Fire Fighters President Alfred K. Whitehead, urged the panel to seek a balance on the boards of trustees of public pension funds.

"Most have employee representatives but they are not evenly balanced (with employer representatives)," explained Schaitberger, who also is legislative counsel of the National Conference on Public Employee Retirement Systems. "It comes down to votes."

Trustees have a fiduciary responsibility to conduct themselves on behalf of participants or beneficiaries, but that does not reach a level of cooperation and commitment unless employees sit at the table, he said.

"Labor-management cooperation helps facilitate the process."

Frontier unfair labor practices ruled

The Frontier Hotel has committed serious unfair labor practices in its nearly four-year-old dispute with its workers, a National Labor Relations Board administrative law judge has ruled.

Under the law, strikers cannot be "permanently replaced" in an unfair labor practice strike, only in an economic strike. The workers, members of the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees, have been on the picket line since September 1991.

Administrative Law Judge Gerald A. Wacknov found that the hotel committed unfair labor practices by withdrawing the workers' pensions and by firing union activists.

"The ruling means that the workers can never be permanently replaced," said Jim Arnold, secretary-treasurer of HERE Local 226. "The NLRB judge has recognized what Las Vegas already knows — the Frontier has caused this strike because of its contempt for its workers' rights," he said.

Wacknov told Frontier management that it should reinstate four workers who were fired and restore pay and benefits to three workers who were suspended for their union activities. He also barred the hotel from further threatening reprisals against workers because of their support for the union.

"People forgot what the strike was about," said Arnold. "They illegally took the pension away, took health and welfare away, cut their wages in some cases by $2 and $3 an hour, and the working conditions were totally terrible. They were firing people left and right for union activity.

"This decision should bring the Frontier to reality: This strike will never go away, until a contract is reached," he said.

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Director of Information: Rex Hardesty

Editor: Michael Byrne

Assistant Editors: Candice Johnson, David Kameras, James B. Parks

Staff Writers: Muriel H. Cooper, Mike Hall Colleen M. O'Neill, Sharolyn A. Rosier

Graphics/Layout: Stan Hitt, Hindi M. Fracasse

AFL-CIO Headquarters: 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006
Telephone: (202) 637-5010
CompuServe: 76004, 3601

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Working families under siege by GOP Congress

Committee blesses company unions and strikebreakers

By Mike Hall

Congress broke for a weeklong July 4 recess after dealing a number of potentially disastrous blows to working families, including a budget resolution that drastically cuts Medicare, education and workplace safety to pay for tax breaks for wealthy Americans and corporations.

A House committee also cleared two onerous pieces of legislation — the so-called TEAM Act that would allow company unions and a bill to overturn President Clinton's executive order prohibiting federal contracts with strikebreakers. A Senate panel also passed a job training bill that raises serious concerns for labor.

Labor won one round when the Senate approved a $6.5 billion highway bill after an attempt to repeal Davis-Bacon prevailing wage provisions was defeated.

The budget straitjacket

A conference committee did little to change the main components in separate budget resolutions passed earlier, ending up with a $280 billion cut in Medicare and $190 billion from Medicaid. The conference report, which passed June 28 with a vote along party lines, awards a $245 gift in tax reductions, mostly benefiting the well-to-do.

"This resolution claims to balance the budget in seven years but in reality this is a dangerous vehicle that could reduce working families' economic well-being, as well as lead to a recession," AFL-CIO Legislative Director Peggy Taylor said in a letter to both houses.

The Medicare and Medicaid cuts "will significantly reduce health benefits for elderly people and poor children. It is important to remember that many elderly Americans live in poverty and that these reductions in Medicare and Medicaid will mean an even further decline in their standard of living. Based on these cuts, HHS estimates that by the year 2002, health care costs for the elderly will increase more than $3,400," she said.

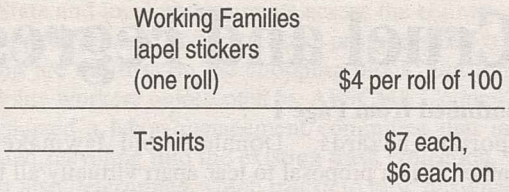
The budget resolution also cuts student loan programs by $10 billion. "This attack on student loans will affect thousands of working-class families, and could well deny higher education opportunities for workers and their children," Taylor said.

The resolution also requires significant reductions in federal efforts to assure the health and safety of workers in their jobs. The AFL-CIO also strongly opposed proposed cuts in OSHA and MSHA, along with a systematic attack on regulations that are designed to protect workers.

The resolution slashed or eliminated several other programs that directly affect construction workers on federal projects, federal government employees, military retirees, state and local transit workers and the very poor.

A budget resolution serves as the blueprint for spending plans, but the actual cuts and tax changes will be enacted in the appropriations and reconciliation process. Unlike a resolution, which cannot be voted, these measures can be challenged by President Clinton.

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Following a short Democratic filibuster, a major battle was averted over the Davis-Bacon Act and 165,000 miles of new National Highway System (NHS) roads. Sen. John W. Warner (R-Va.), the bill's author, agreed to withdraw an amendment that would have repealed the act for those highway projects.

Along with the filibuster, the Clinton administration had promised to veto the bill, S. 440, if it included the Davis-Bacon ban. The bill was passed on a voice vote June 22.

TEAM Act sent to floor

The TEAM Act, which could reintroduce the concept of company unions for American workers, was approved by the House Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee June 22. The vote was 22-19, along party lines.

While proponents claim it promotes employee participation, H.R. 743 would destroy the right of workers to have a real voice on the job, amending the section of the National Labor Relations Act that bans company unions.

"Congress has affirmed and reaffirmed that such employer control is in truth, and should remain in law, an unfair labor practice. Today, some in Congress, at the urging of employer and management groups, but with virtually no support from working people, seek to repeal that prohibition and to revive the time of company unions," Taylor said.

Just before the committee vote, more than 400 labor law professors and arbitrators signed a letter to Congress urging rejection of the TEAM Act. They said the measure would prevent real worker-management cooperation by "encouraging illegitimate forms of employee involvement and discouraging the legitimate expression of worker voice."

The administration is strongly opposed to the bill, and Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich has said he would recommend that President Clinton veto it.

Strikebreakers backed

Earlier, the same committee reported out H.R. 1176, a bill that nullifies Clinton's executive order prohibiting contractors who have permanently replaced lawfully striking workers from receiving federal contracts. The 22-16 vote on June 14 also fell along party lines.

"This legislation will benefit only a few firms that resort to permanently replacing their workers instead of seeking solutions at the bargaining table. However, the bill will indeed cause serious harm to the government, taxpayers and workers," Taylor said in a letter to the committee.

"The executive order recognizes the damaging impact the use of permanent replacements has on workers, communities and industrial relations. The order also attempts to assure quality goods and services are provided by federal contractors in a timely manner and it promotes fairness and stability in labor-management relations," Taylor said.

Training bill problematic

The Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee approved a job training bill that consolidates some 91 federal education and training programs into a single program of block grants to the states.

The AFL-CIO has expressed concern over the bill's lack of labor protections and the inability of unions to participate in training programs. The federation also fears the impact on the Employment Service, the unemployment insurance system (UI) and the School-to-Work Opportunities Act.

Consolidating the programs might jeopardize the continuation of Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) and NAFTA-TAA as separate worker assistance programs, and eliminate the role of private organizations such the AFL-CIO's Human Resources Development Institute and the National Alliance for Business in skills and work force development.

AFL-CIO media campaign raises volume in more districts

Continued from Page 1

for the nation's children and on the Republican onslaught against programs that make that dream real — college loans, job training, school lunches, safe workplaces. They also will spotlight GOP plans to cut Medicare to pay for tax cuts for big corporations and the rich.

Highlighted in materials provided to union members in the districts will be the Republican budget — with its massive cuts in education, Medicare and workplace safety — as well as such anti-worker legislation as the so-called TEAM Act, repeal of the Davis-Bacon and Service Contract acts and efforts to kill the 40-hour week and overtime.

This Republican war on American workers, especially the recent attack on workplace safety, will be part of the information campaign aimed at union members and the public.

"Health and safety provides probably the best example of the distorted priorities of this Congress," Donahue said. "Last November, working Americans did not vote to dismantle the job safety protections provided by the Occupational Safety and Health Act — protections that cut workplace fatalities by more than half and cut illness and injury incidence a third in the past 20 years. Yet, a dismantling of OSHA is exactly what is proposed." **(See story, Page 1.)**

The Stand UP campaign began in February. During the April and Memorial Day recesses, thousands of people responded to AFL-CIO ads, many using the toll-free hotline to send messages to their members of Congress.

Additional districts will be targeted for special activities during the longer August recess.

The $500,000 ad campaign includes television spots in Eureka, Calif.; Terre Haute, Ind.; Tulsa, Okla.; Chattanooga, Tenn.; Casper-Riverton, Wyo.; and Beaumont-Port Arthur, Texas. The radio commercials will be aired in Boston; Philadelphia; Seattle; Atlanta; Portland, Ore.; Chicago and Peoria, Ill.; Bridgeport, Conn.; Rochester and Buffalo, N.Y.; Columbus, Ohio; Raleigh-Durham, N.C.; and Las Vegas.

'We should be doing more, not less' on job safety

By Colleen M. O'Neill

Unions are fighting on a number of fronts to counter multiple assaults on workplace safety and health now being considered in both houses of Congress.

Sen. Nancy L. Kassebaum (R-Kan.) held oversight hearings June 21 and 22 on the Occupational Safety and Health Act, including testimony from representatives of the Clothing and Textile Workers and the Steelworkers.

"Many people today are talking about cutting back on government regulations. I am here today to tell you about the good things that happened in our plant because of government regulations," said Rick Treaster, president of ACTWU Local 2400 in Lewiston, Pa., during the June 21 hearing.

He detailed the winding road toward a joint labor-management safety committee — a road that included OSHA citations and changes to accommodate ergonomic problems — and noted that workers were more productive and turning out higher-quality auto floor mats with better labor relations.

"We can't forget how we got started. Without OSHA, the old way might have gone on for a long time," Treaster said. "But once we got started with the safety effort, it made a big difference in all these other areas as well."

Noting the 55 percent decline in the fatality rate since OSHA was passed 25 years ago, USWA Health, Safety and Environment Director Michael J. Wright asserted the OSHAct does work.

"We should be strengthening OSHA, not weakening it. We should be giving workers more rights, not fewer," he said. "We should be doing more, not less.

"I have spent most of my career trying to build voluntary, cooperative safety and health programs between workers and management," Wright told the panel June 22. "All my experience convinces me that the best incentives for such programs are mandatory standards and vigorous government enforcement."

Meanwhile, Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole (R-Kan.) and Sen. Bennett Johnston (D-La.) were seeking a compromise on regulatory reform, and were slated to introduce a measure the last week of June. It would threaten new rule-makings through the additional requirement of new studies and analyses, while employing a greater emphasis on making money for business over saving workers' lives.

Finally, the budget battles still loom over OSHA, the Mine Safety and Health Administration and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. The House budget proposal would merge MSHA and OSHA in fiscal 1996 and cut the combined annual budget by 20 percent. The Senate version would cut OSHA's budget by 50 percent.

Culture of safety in construction being built up

The 2nd National Conference on Ergonomics, Safety and Health in Construction focused on the need for prevention and a greater awareness of the tools of the marketplace.

"Our challenge is to find out the hows and whys of occupational diseases, injuries and deaths, and, even more importantly, to find a message that workers will listen to — a message that will awaken them to the urgency of safety and health and that will inspire them to adopt protective measures," said Joseph F. Maloney, secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department.

As with most workplace issues, unions are leading the way on health and safety, he said, helping to develop a culture of safety with education and training. "On job sites, I see more and more safety gear being used, more workers protecting themselves with information and with equipment," he said.

More than 900 construction workers die yearly of work-related injuries — an average of three to four deaths per workday, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports. More than 200,000 serious injuries occur also in construction.

The gathering was sponsored by BCTD, employer organizations, government agencies and public health organizations, including the Labor-Management 1990s Committee, the departments of Energy and Commerce, the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the International Labor Organization.

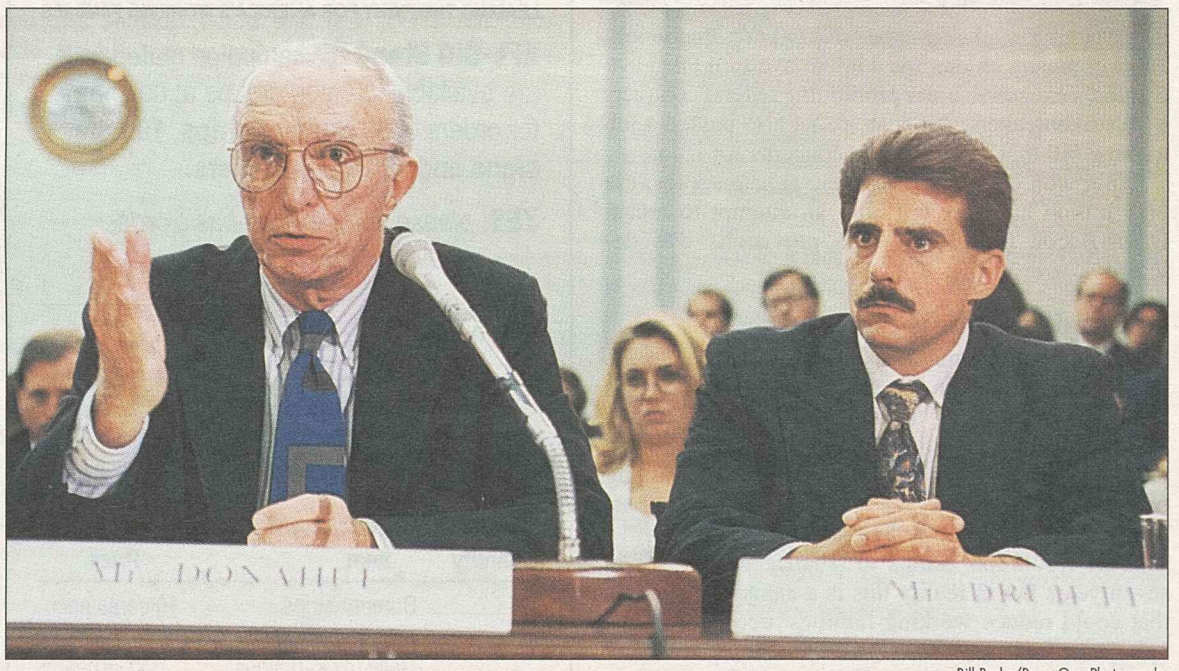
The meeting served as a follow-up to the 1993 conference and four regional conferences across the country in 1994.

Summarizing three days of discussions and workshops, former Secretary of Labor John T. Dunlop recommended the following approaches to improving worker health and safety in the industry:

- Renewed emphasis by OSHA on prevention and results rather than traditional inspections.
- Keeping current on developments in safety and health in other developed countries.
- The use of training and retraining and training again to develop an industry culture that progressively reduces accidents and occupational illness.
- Combining medical coverage under workers' compensation with general health insurance.
- Improving data collection on work-related illness and injury rates, project sizes, the size of the contractor population, type of construction done and locality.
- Establishing performance goals, such as fewer than one lost-time-injury case per 200,000 hours worked.
- Greater economic research regarding contractors, construction and its services.
- Expanding research and development on safety and health.
- Teamwork between owners, architects, contractors, supervisors, workers and their unions, with focus on safety.

In addition to plenary sessions, workshops and roundtables, those in attendance heard remarks from OSHA Administrator Joseph A. Dear and NIOSH Director Dr. Linda Rosenstock.

— Colleen M. O'Neill



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue testifies along with James Druiett of the Plumbers and Pipe Fitters.

'Cruel and regressive' bill assailed

Continued from Page 1

important hazards," Donahue told lawmakers. "Rather, it is a proposal to tear apart virtually all the worker safety and health protections that have been put in place over the past 25 years.

"It is based upon the premise that the safety and health laws of this country are too strong and that workers have too much protection from job injuries and illnesses. It presumes that employers will act responsibly on their own, without government oversight or intervention, in the best interests of workers, despite a long history demonstrating this not to be the case for many employers."

Donahue scored Ballenger's "cruel and regressive" measure for its reduction of the OSHA enforcement program to an almost non-existent effort while limiting the right of workers to complain to OSHA, and taking away unions' ability to represent their members on safety and health matters.

The legislation also would give employers license to set up and dictate to committees that deal with safety and health matters and other issues legally subject to collective bargaining, he said. "It is a back-door attempt to pass the so-called TEAM Act in the process of rewriting the job safety laws."

Presenting the administration's perspective, Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich urged lawmakers not to accept the measure's weak enforcement provisions. He also argued on behalf of OSHA's general-duty clause, through which the agency currently deals with ergonomics, tuberculosis and other hazards not addressed explicitly by an OSHA protective standard.

Reich also emphasized the absolute necessity of maintaining strong protection for mine workers.

"The provisions of this legislation reflect an approach to mine safety and health that already has been tried — and rejected: Mine inspections would be severely curtailed, even for gassy mines where the danger of explosion is high," Reich said. "MSHA's most effective enforcement tools would be eliminated or restricted. Miners who stand up for safety would lose rights and remedies."

Among the UMWA members in attendance was Larry Knisell of Morgantown, W.Va., who warned that "we're not going to lie down and let them roll over us and the safety and health protections we fought so hard for."

Dramatic evidence of the need for strong prevention and enforcement efforts was provided by an injured worker, James Druiett of the Plumbers and Pipe Fitters, who testified with Donahue.

One hour into his job, the scaffold shifted and Druiett fell 20 feet, with his head striking an 8-inch pipe that was standing up on end.

"I was still conscious after the fall," he recalled. "I swallowed my tongue and began choking. One of my co-workers knew first aid and saved my life. Shortly afterwards, the ambulance came and took me to Bellevue Hospital in New York, where I lapsed into a coma that I didn't come out of for two weeks.

"Now, six years later, I am finally able to begin to look for work again," he said.

Druiett had been working on asbestos removal, a job for which he had received three hours' training. The scaffolding had no safety railing and the wheels did not lock properly.

As a result of the fall, Druiett is deaf in one ear and has partial blindness in both eyes; he has undergone several surgeries, as well as physical therapy, cognitive training and rehabilitation.

"I'm proof that voluntary compliance doesn't work. . . . OSHA laws are not meant to be suggestions," he said. "Using a warning system (instead of citations) in construction means that, for most employers, they will never be held accountable for conditions on the job."

The BCTD's Georgine elaborated at the subcommittee's June 28 hearing.

"In this most hazardous industry, the work site changes daily," he told lawmakers. "A hazard that exists one day will not likely remain in place to be discovered by the convoluted protocol required by H.R. 1834, because this legislation eliminates all first inspection citations and requires 30-day abatement periods before a citation can be issued.

"On many construction sites, that will be an invitation to abandon safe practices and healthy conditions," Georgine said.

Cooperative programs boost public workers

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

Necessity is mothering invention in public-sector unions, where workers are turning to innovative cooperative arrangements to fight privatization.

For example, city workers in Houston, members of AFSCME Local 1550, have worked with the city government to create Total Maintenance, a labor-management company that now runs the Public Utility Department, leaving behind the so-called "competitive services committee" that sought to bid out that work.

Across the country, public-sector unions are forging cooperative arrangements to thwart such short-sighted solutions as layoffs and privatization. Through labor-management cooperation, unions have improved service delivery, budgets and personnel systems, as well as skills that enhance the workplace in general.

In Houston, the cooperative effort meant "we saved the city of Houston more than $1 million in overtime and salaries in one year," said AFSCME Local 1550 President Faye Cole.

Prior to this project, Cole explained, city workers couldn't bid. "That's why we initiated it. We wanted a way to have some voice in the way the work is performed, not to become victims. And we wanted to trim some of the fat in middle management."

Run by a board of directors composed of union stewards and management, the company also has sub-teams that are responsible for customer service, training, quality assurance, rewards and recognition, and project communication.

The program has proven what the union knew all along — the workers can do it better, she added.

"We weren't about to lose our jobs to inefficient private contractors," said Harris County AFL-CIO President Richard Shaw, former president of AFSCME Local 1550.

Texas has no state collective bargaining laws for public employees, so "every day the city council can change the contract," Shaw noted. In that environment, forging relationships and building trust become very important.

"Once the idea of cooperation is ingrained, it works," said AFL-CIO Public Employee Department President Al Bilik. "It works no matter who is in office because we're the continuity factor in the public sector."

Bilik, a member of the Secretary of Labor's Task Force on Excellence in State and Local Government through Labor-Management Cooperation, explained that parties in the cooperative agreements "must have a mutual obligation to each other and to the citizens they serve."

Bilik said the task force, through site visits the past two years, has found a common theme: successful cooperative workplaces do not use the threat of competition or privatization to browbeat workers.

Taking cooperation to school

Like most public school systems, Cincinnati was losing students to private schools. But the Cincinnati AFT refused to wait on the school board to solve the problem.

"We fought the stereotype that unions are just concerned about their own members' welfare and don't care about the public's interest or their students," said Tom Mooney, president of the union.

Through bargaining and various labor-management committees, the union negotiated peer-review systems and smaller class sizes and established an education initiatives panel that reviews education reform proposals.

The peer review systems, jointly administered by the union and the school district, enlist new union members under a system modeled after union apprenticeship programs. The union also takes responsibility for intervening when members are not teaching according to professional standards.

"Since we first began in the mid- to late-1980s, we went from 65 percent membership in an open shop to 85 percent in a few years," Mooney said. "Then we became an agency shop, and now membership is well over 90 percent."

Changing minds with work

Another success story is AFSCME Council 62 in Indianapolis. The union was confronted by a new mayor who campaigned on reducing government by 25 percent in his first year.



John Schroeder/ASFCME

AFSCME Local 3131 President Dominic Mangine conducted a tour of the Indianapolis Fleet Services Department for members of the Labor Department's Task Force on Excellence in State and Local Government. The union's labor-management cooperation arrangement has achieved worker empowerment, gain sharing, changes in work structure and a 90 percent decrease in grievances. Among those pictured are Al Bilik, president of the AFL-CIO Public Employee Department; Edward Hilz, Labor Department industrial relations specialist; and Hezekiah Brown, of Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations.

The mayor meant privatizing, according to AFSCME Council 62 Executive Director Stephen Fantauzzo. But in the city's efforts to privatize, the union won about 75 percent of the bids, and "our bids are coming in at about 70 percent of the estimate."

State and local governments across the country are strapped for cash, and sometimes programs like recycling are the first on the chopping block. But Philadelphia workers represented by AFSCME Council 33 organized a labor-management committee that integrated recycling into the existing trash collection.

It also determined which trucks to buy, designed a specialized container and selected the type of collection containers used by each household. The committee's program substantially exceeded the city's mandatory goal of recycling 50 percent of all waste.

The Professional and Technical Employees Local 5 at Mare Island Naval Shipyard in Vallejo, Calif., formed a labor-management committee to solve problems with subjectivity in employee appraisals. After several meetings and discussions, the union developed a new system that includes a consistent application of performance standards. And now discussions are year-round rather than just at the end of the rating period.

Partners in the federal sector

Much of the impetus for labor-management partnerships in government came at the federal level, with President Clinton's October 1993 Executive Order 12871 calling for creation of partnership councils throughout the federal government.

The National Partnership Council was designed to promote partnership through collective bargaining and joint decision-making over workplace operations.

"Parnerships have expanded, attitudes have changed and managers and base commanders are as eager to meet as our own union leaders," said AFGE President John N. Sturdivant. "We're trying to bring about a culture change, which is a long-term process.

"Good government is not a Democrat or Republican issue. It's an American issue," said Sturdivant. "We hope Republicans would be responsive to how to make government work better."

A noted lack of labor-management cooperation is behind multiple workplace problems faced by the U.S. Postal Service, the General Accounting Office said in an October 1994 report. Both the Postal Workers and Letter Carriers have complained about the paramilitary command structure of the USPS.

Recently, however, USPS surrendered to NALC an equal authority with management in deciding how to structure assignments and move to more automation. The union is renegotiating the program, which has had some problems with implementation.

The bureaucratic entanglement

The hostile administration of Michigan's Republican Gov. John Engler has worked against both workers and good government, said Vicky Cook, president of Service Employees Local 31-M, whose members administer employment and job training programs.

Prior to Engler's election, Michigan had a program called the Michigan Opportunity Card, which allowed people to access employment services. Computers had been purchased and were set up in shopping malls.

When Engler was elected, the computers were left unused. Instead, the governor established the Michigan Jobs Commission, which will privatize employment services in Michigan.

When Congress tries to cede power to state governments, such moves sometimes allow national policy objectives to be held hostage by the states, Cook said.

States, most of which derive some 20 percent of their revenue from the federal government, can expect less with proposed block grants. The last time Washington tried block grants, under Ronald Reagan's New Federalism, most programs were capped at early 1980s levels. And actual payments to the states plunged by some 30 percent over the next 10 years.

Legislative boundaries

Many factors contribute to successful cooperation in the public sector. But a larger issue is the exclusion of public-sector employees from the same national labor relations law that protects and provides bargaining rights for private-sector workers.

As of 1994, 23 states and the District of Columbia had comprehensive collective bargaining laws for all public employees. Approximately 8.9 million state and local government workers in these states are protected by law. But nearly 6 million public employees are denied the legal right to collective bargaining.

Despite these legislative boundaries, the government remains one of the most highly unionized sectors of the U.S. economy. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 37 percent of public-sector workers are union members and 43 percent are represented in collective bargaining units.

"There are exceptions, but usually we don't have an adversarial atmosphere," Bilik said of public employers.

Copies of an AFL-CIO Public Employee Department report, "Reinvigorating the Public Service: Union Innovations to Improve Government," are available from the Public Employee Departiment, AFL-CIO, 815 16th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

ILO condemns Nigeria, Burma for abusing rights

By James B. Parks

The International Labor Organization strongly condemned Nigeria and Burma for gross violations of world labor standards on freedom of association and forced labor.

Nigeria's military regime continues to show its "disdain for democratic freedoms" by arresting trade union leaders without charges, refusing to recognize the right to organize and replacing elected trade union leaders with hand-picked administrators, said John T. Joyce, president of the Bricklayers. Five union leaders are known to be under arrest, with others in hiding, he said.

Even though it ratified Convention 87 on freedom of association 35 years ago, Nigeria's government dissolved several key unions in 1994 and suspended the dues check-off system. The regime also decreed that its actions could not be challenged in court.

"It is quite apparent that the military rulers of Nigeria have removed their country from the civilized world and, to ensure its isolation, the regime has been consistent in its effort to forbid free and independent unions the opportunity to operate," Joyce said.

The ILO "urgently demanded" that Nigeria "repeal the decrees dissolving unions . . . and restore to the organizations concerned the right to elect their representatives in full freedom without any interference from the public authorities."

Despite 30 years of prodding by the ILO, "there still are no unions in the true sense of the term" in Burma, where workers are forced to work on government projects without pay, the organization found. The government amazingly claims these workers volunteered to work for nothing.

"There are new stories about forced labor in Burma almost every week," Phil Fishman, AFL-CIO assistant international affairs director, told the ILO committee on application standards. In June, there were numerous news reports of Burmese army officials rounding up civilians to work as porters, never to be seen again, he said.

The country's rulers even "boasted that there are nearly 800,000 Burmese in one area of the country alone who cannot wait apparently after a hard week of laboring in the fields to 'volunteer' their services to build roads and railroads for little or no renumeration," Fishman said. "There are photographs of people in shackles building what is now being called the death railroad."



AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland is flanked by Charles Gray, international affairs director, and Jerry Zelhoeffer, the federation's European representative, at the ILO conference.

Fishman pointed to recent forced evacuation and razing of villages by the Burmese government to build a $1 billion gas pipeline, paid for by the U.S. corporation UNOCAL and its French counterpart, TOTAL.

The ILO delegates called for Burma to "terminate forced labor practices on the ground and to provide for penalties for those exacting forced labor."

Such practices, unfortunately becoming more numerous in today's global economy, could be avoided if enforceable social clauses were included in trade agreements, said U.S. worker delegate Charles Gray, AFL-CIO international affairs director. Some of the most vocal opponents of social clauses already have ratified the core conventions that would be included, Gray said.

"The only conclusion one can draw is that there is a large element of hypocrisy involved — that these countries are not applying and not enforcing the provisions of those conventions. They are fearful — one might say almost paranoid — of the possible ramifications that some sort of social clause incorporated in trade agreements might bring. In the meantime, their workers, the backbone of the nation, pay the penalty of deprivation and rampant exploitation," he said.

The conference also adopted a convention and recommendation on safety and health in mines. This is the first time the ILO has established international safety standards for mining.

The committee on homework recommended a new convention to provide equal treatment for home workers with traditional employees, particularly in the areas of pay, social security, maternity protection and health and safety.

"The growing number of employees who work at home, performing jobs ranging from making clothes to telecommunicating by computer, are among some of the most exploited and defenseless workers," Fishman said. "So the ILO's discussion of a new standard protecting them is an important advance in protecting workers in non-traditional forms of employment."

The ILO conference also proposed a "zero growth" budget of $579.5 million for 1996 and 1997, but gave no indication of how much — if anything — the United States would contribute.

Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) has proposed ending U.S. participation in the ILO as part of a reduction in the overall federal budget for international affairs. The U.S. currently spends about $64 million annually to support the ILO.

The AFL-CIO Executive Council disputed Helms' claim that the ILO structure is outdated in the global economy and gives too much of a role to labor unions. "To ensure that this new global economy benefits, and does not exploit, the workers whose activism and sacrifices made it possible, democratic governments must do all they can to ensure that economic development is not achieved at the price of human freedom," the AFL-CIO said.

Haiti vote hailed as major victory for trade unions

Port-au-Prince

Trade unionists from Haiti and the United States played a major role in making Haiti's second democratic election a success.

The June 25 vote, which saw a 50 percent turnout, was the first free vote for legislators and mayors. The 1990 vote for president was the first free election in more than 30 years.

Haitian trade unions registered more than 850,000 persons to vote, about one-quarter of all voters. Some 450 Haitian union leaders were observers for the elections. The unions also conducted an extensive voter education program, holding candidate forums in four different regions of the country and distributing flyers and posters describing how to vote.

The AFL-CIO sent seven observers to the election and noted, based on the unionists' reports, that the elections were fair and honest, despite some initial confusion and disorganization.

"The difficulties in the election — late openings, missing ballots, etc. — were the result of inexperience, not sabotage or incompetence. The lack of widespread violence also is to be commended," the federation said.

AFSCME Secretary-Treasurer William Lucy, who heads the Coalition of Black Trade Unions, was a member of a high-level observer team formed by TransAfrica. The AFL-CIO's seven observers included Florida AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Anthony Hill; Washington Metropolitan AFL-CIO President Joslyn Williams; Wil Duncan, CBTU executive director; Emily Donahue of the AFL-CIO's American Institute for Free Labor Development; Georges Exceus and Jean-Claude Coupet of AIFLD's Port-au-Prince office; and James B. Parks, assistant editor of the AFL-CIO News.

The delegation noted that a few months ago, Haiti was in the "grips of a repressive military regime and suffered from a lack of infrastructure and basic necessities. To have been able to conduct an election at all in such a short time is a minor miracle."



James B. Parks/AFL-CIO News

Haiti balloting was observed by Emily Donohue of AIFLD and Anthony Hill of the Florida AFL-CIO.

The elections were very significant for Haitian trade unionists, many of whom are without work after most businesses closed down because of trade embargoes imposed on Haiti's former military rulers. Haiti has an 80 percent unemployment rate, with about 90 percent of the population listed as poor. About 47 percent of the country is illiterate.

The 11 democratic Haitian trade union federations did not endorse any candidates, instead opting to establish a list of legislative goals that include a new labor code, social security, health care and pensions.

But for most Haitians, the key to the election's success was the feeling that for the first time the people who sat in the legislature and mayors' seats would reflect the will of the people who elected them, instead of an elite. They also hoped that their future would be better.

"It's a step in the right direction," said Dominique Antoine, a 23-year-old Port-au-Prince law student. "It felt good to know that I had a choice."

Antoine said she hoped the election was a precursor to establishing justice. "There really is no justice in Haiti. Everyone feels they can take care of everything themselves. You can't do that."

The AFL-CIO was instrumental in maintaining contact between Jean Bertrand Aristide and his trade union supporters during the president's exile, including a meeting at federation headquarters with AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland.

— James B. Parks

Needle trades unions UNITE for common good

By Muriel H. Cooper
Miami Beach

As hundreds of delegates gave their unanimous approval, the Ladies' Garment Workers and the Clothing and Textile Workers merged to form UNITE — the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees.

The merger, announced during the AFL-CIO's Executive Council meeting in February, officially went into effect July 1, bringing together 350,000 workers and making it the fourth-largest manufacturing union in the federation.

ILGWU President Jay Mazur will serve as UNITE's first president, with ACTWU Secretary-Treasurer Arthur R. Loevy becoming secretary-treasurer of the merged union. Bruce S. Raynor of ACTWU and Edgar Romney of ILGWU will become executive vice presidents.

ACTWU President Jack Sheinkman will retire as a union officer, but continue to serve as chairman of the Board of the Amalgamated Bank of New York.

The merger agreement outlines a 12-year process of gradual transition, with the 200,000 ACTWU members and 150,000 ILGWU members maintaining their current affiliations under one banner.

In an effort to standardize the dues structure, ACTWU members will have their dues increased at 50 percent of the rate for ILGWU members until dues are equalized. Currently ACTWU pays an average of $18.55, while ILGWU will make minimum monthly payments of $17.

The staffs will be combined and located at ILGWU headquarters in New York City. Conventions will be held every four years instead of every three years.

The new union committed $10 million to expand organizing efforts. "We are going to organize in a new sense of the word," said Mazur. "We are going to organize ourselves and others, within our ranks and beyond."

The new union also will take to the international arena to champion the rights of workers throughout the world, Mazur said

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland saluted the two unions for their tireless work overseas.

"The grim consequences of rampant market capitalism have already been felt by workers throughout the world, as multinational enterprises roam the world in search of the cheapest and most repressed labor," he said. "They must be opposed vigorously by all who love liberty and democracy and the right of human beings to band together to pursue their interests and aspirations, lest a great gulf open into which human beings will fall to ruin."

Other speakers included the Rev. Jesse L. Jackson; Rep. Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.); Gloria Johnson, president of the Coalition of Labor Union Women; Bob White, president of the Canadian Labor Congress; and San Juan, P.R., Mayor Hector Louis Acevedo.

OPEIU will target organizing with per capita raise

Vancouver, B.C.

Office and Professional Employees celebrated their union's 50th anniversary and enthusiastically responded to a call for "investing in your future" by approving per capita increases for organizing and servicing efforts.

More than 420 delegates to the June 19-22 convention voted to establish a new $2.8 million organizing fund for "regional organizing cooperatives."

"We will hire organizers whose sole job will be to work on organizing — with the members they organize to go to the local union participating in the campaign or the local union in the area," OPEIU President Michael Goodwin told the convention.

"Experience has shown us that the most successful campaigns involve rank-and-file volunteers from organized units who can share positive experiences about the union," he said.

Goodwin and Secretary-Treasurer Gilles Beauregard were re-elected to their posts unanimously. Goodwin was elected to a first full term after succeeding John Kelly, who died in office last year.

The union approved a raise in the per capita by 65 cents on the first 500 members and 40 cents on 501 or more. The assessment will go up another 40 cents in 1996 and 30 cents in 1997.

In addition, $1.5 million will be transferred from the union strike fund into the organizing fund. Fifteen cents of the per capita increase, supplemented by additional 15-cent increases in 1996 and 1997, will be earmarked for the fund. Benefits under the strike fund were increased from $170 to $200 over three years.

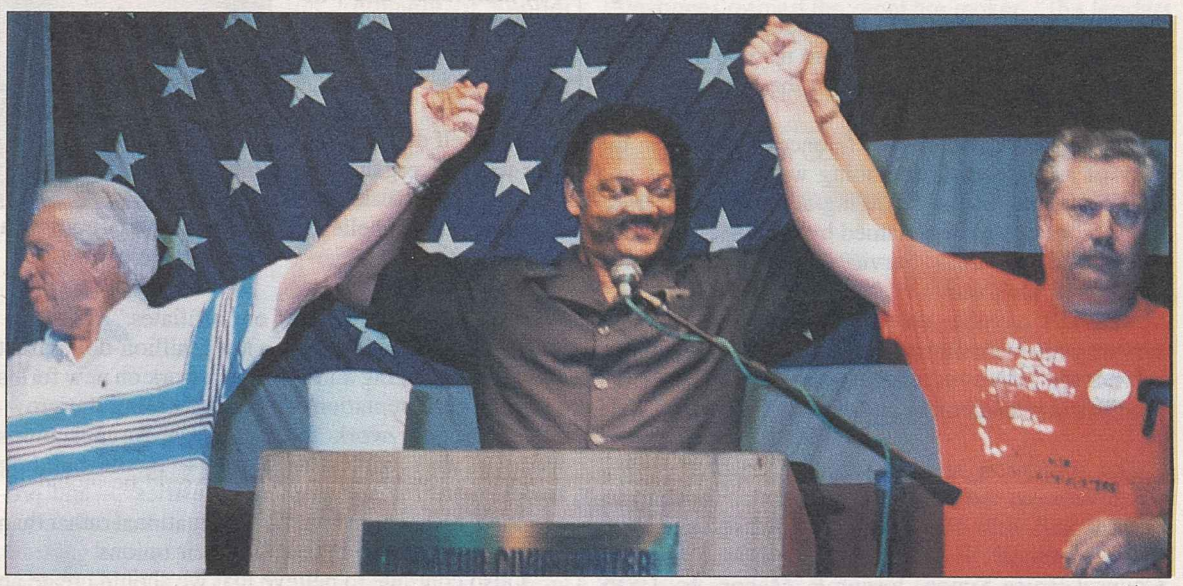
The OPEIU also approved local union dues increases of $1 a month in each of the next three years.

Several speakers praised the OPEIU initiative on organizing, including AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue, who pledged a renewed effort in that pursuit by the federation.

"We can't wait for a better law before we go about the task of organizing the unorganized," Donahue said. "Indeed, in my view, our best hope of achieving labor law reform is first to bring millions of new workers into our ranks."

Gloria Johnson, president of the Coalition of Labor Union Women, said, "Imagine what we could accomplish if the trade union movement were to come together to use the force and talents of all the members we represent to organize. If ever that unity were needed, it is today. Too much is at stake."

Other speakers included Farm Workers President Arturo Rodriguez; Michelle King of Union Privilege; Rep. Neil Abercrombie (D-Hawaii); British Columbia Federation of Labor President Kenneth V. Georgetti; Sunera Thobani, president, National Action Committee on the Status of Women; and British Columbia Skill, Training and Labor Minister Dan Miller.



Tom Johnson

The Rev. Jesse L. Jackson raises his arms in solidarity with Paperworkers President Wayne Glenn, left, and Roger Gates, president of Rubber Workers Local 713, during rally in Decatur, Ill.

'All workers share Decatur struggle'

By James B. Parks

Some 4,000 union members and supporters rallied June 25 to show their support for workers who have been locked out or are on strike in Decatur, Ill.

Joining them were top labor leaders, including AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue and five Executive Council members, as well as Rep. David E. Bonior (D-Mich.) and the Rev. Jesse L. Jackson.

"The race doesn't go to the swiftest. It goes to 'hold on,'" Jackson told the marchers. "This struggle is worth our lives. . . . We can hold on just a little while longer."

Calling for national mobilization to counter anti-worker policies, Jackson said, "It is not enough just to march in Decatur. We should be marching in Chicago and 25 cities, from seven o'clock to four o'clock for five days in a row and change America's policies."

Some 4,000 workers or 7 percent of Decatur's work force have been on strike or locked out at three companies — Paperworkers at A.E. Staley Manufacturing, UAW members at Caterpillar Inc. and Rubber Workers at Bridgestone/Firestone.

The URW recently ended its nationwide strike, but many union members remain out of work. The rally marked the second anniversary of the Staley lockout.

UPIU President Wayne Glenn called for union members to get out the vote to throw out those who oppose worker rights. "There is a lot wrong with America these days, as working people here in Decatur can tell you. But there is nothing wrong that can't be changed. There's more of us than there are of them if we use our power at the ballot box."

Donahue pledged the continued support of organized labor. "For working people from coast to coast — truck drivers and teachers, secretaries and steelworkers — your struggle is their struggle. You are fighting not just for yourselves and your families but for every working family in this country. When you win — as you will — we all will win."

Mine Workers President Richard Trumka warned, "For as much hurt and as much suffering as Staley and Bridgestone and Caterpillar are causing this community now, it is nothing compared to the kind of union-busting, corporate crime wave that'll be unleashed against working families in Decatur — and cities and towns throughout this whole region — if they win and working people lose."

Meanwhile, federal mediators delayed talks between UPIU Local 7837 and Staley management.

The company was to present a full proposal on economic and non-economic issues in the June 30 meeting. Besides contract issues, the company is expected to offer a retirement and severance package, and address the issue of amnesty for dismissed workers as part of a return-to-work plan.

The URW filed an unfair labor practices charge against Bridgestone/Firestone, saying the company's "replacements" took the posts of illegally fired URW members.

URW President Kenneth Coss and Steelworkers President George Becker said that Bridgestone's "permanent replacements" and other anti-union activities would be illegal and intolerable in Japan, where the tire maker's headquarters is located.

"Bridgestone would not dare to try it there," they said in a joint statement. "But it has no qualms about doing it here and then trying to pass itself off as an all-American company" — the slogan the company used to promote its tires at the Indianapolis 500. The URW was to meet in a special convention June 30 to consider a merger with the USWA.

Other speakers at the Decatur rally included AFSCME President Gerald W. McEntee; Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union President Lenore Miller; James Hatfield, chairman of the Glass, Molders and Pottery Workers; and Robert Wages, president of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers.

BARGAINING

ACTWU seals 5-year pact

The Clothing and Textile Workers ratified a new five-year accord with Hoechst Celanese covering 2,900 workers at plants in South Carolina and Virginia.

The agreement includes average wage increases of 4 percent each year, resulting in an average wage of more than $12.25 per hour, far surpassing the rate of inflation, noted ACTWU Executive Vice President Bruce Raynor, who led the negotiating team.

Also included is a pension plan with benefits of nearly $1,000 per month for long-term employees; a managed health care plan with no deductible for many services and $10 per office visit; and a 50-cents-on-the-dollar company match to employee payments for a 401(k) savings plan.

The new contract also includes a profit-sharing program paying up to 7 percent of employees' annual pay, increased sick pay benefits and a nearly 33 percent increase in life insurance coverage.

Hoechst Celanese is a multimillion dollar acetate and cigarette filter manufacturer with plants throughout the United States, Canada and Germany.

Postal arbitration under way

A three-member arbitration panel chaired by Jack Clarke began work June 16 to resolve the collective bargaining impasse between the Postal Workers and the U.S. Postal Service.

The panel will resolve differences standing in the way of an agreement including wage increases and the elimination of cost-of-living-adjustments. Clarke, of Hillsboro, Ala., was named by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service to be the neutral tie-breaker on the panel.

APWU's member on the panel is Joel Popkin, a private consultant on wage and salary issues who has served the union in past negotiations. The USPS member is management attorney R. Theodore Clark, Jr.

The arbitration panel convened to resolve the impasse between the USPS and the Letter Carriers recessed until July 10. The panel held sessions June 7-12. Members of that panel are NALC General Counsel Bruce Simon, Joseph E. Mahon, Jr., USPS vice president for labor relations and Arthur Stark, the neutral chair.

Also involved in arbitration are members of the Mail Handlers, a division of the Laborers.

Pepsi strike spreads

A strike by Teamsters in the Los Angeles area against Pepsico spread when three locals in Southern California began honoring the strikers' picket lines.

Some 700 IBT workers at four locals walked out June 21 after rejecting a final contract offer that contained inadequate pension and health care benefits. The strike affects Pepsico drivers, warehouse and production workers in Los Angeles, Torrance, Baldwin Park, San Fernando and Buena Park. The prior agreement expired April 3.

The main issue is the union's request for an early retirement option with full benefits for workers if they qualify under the existing pension plan. The Pepsi workers are covered by IBT's Western States Pension Plan, which includes an early retirement option. But Pepsi does not want its employees to have that option, said IBT spokeswoman Gaye Williams.

Some 1,300 IBT members in western states are working under contracts that have expired or are about to expire.

Retirees take on GE

Shouting "GE, share the wealth," about 300 retirees and Electronic Workers rallied at the GE plant in Schenectady, N.Y., to demand that the company give bigger pensions from the over-funded pension funds.

The Schenectady rally was one of many staged around the country June 15 by the 14 unions of the Coordinated Bargaining Committee of GE, headed by IUE President William Bywater.

"GE claims that if it makes an adjustment now for retirees, there will not be enough for retirees in the future. That statement is ridiculous," Bywater said.

The GE pension fund has a $6 billion surplus, he said, but retirees have not received a cost-of-living increase since 1991. Since then, inflation has seriously eroded the real value of the retiree's benefits.

Lineups complete for AFL-CIO election

Continued from Page 1

at the Executive Council meeting in Chicago Aug. 1 would be the retirement of AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland. Kirkland announced that decision June 12.

The council then would fill the vacancies, with Donahue seeking the presidency and nominating Easterling to replace him as secretary-treasurer. Each of the 35 council members has one vote.

Sweeney told reporters the decision has not been made on whether he will oppose Donahue then, but he definitely will do so at the Oct. 23-26 AFL-CIO convention, when each affiliate's vote is determined by the number of members on whom it pays AFL-CIO per capita tax.

Calling the AFL-CIO "a vastly different and better organization than it was in 1979," Donahue said his first priority will be organizing.

He traced the development of the AFL-CIO Organizing Institute from a two-person operation in 1990 through a 500 percent increase in its budget and an operation that has graduated 400 organizers since 1990 — and "this year will provide classroom training to 900 individuals and will provide supervised internships and apprenticeships to 200."



Linda Chavez-Thompson
Candidate for new post

While "the AFL-CIO cannot itself do the front line work or organizing unorganized workers," Donahue said, "I believe the federation can energize the organizing process and assist the work of our affiliates."

To that end, he proposed a multimillion-dollar trust fund for organizing and continued work on new forms of union representation, including serving the growing contingent work force through "organizations modeled after our craft unions — in the building trades, maritime and printing industries — and professional associations with an occupational rather than a workplace focus" in forming their unions.

"I also continue to believe that we should create an American Association of Working Persons to serve the active work force in the much the same way that AARP and the National Council of Senior Citizens serve older Americans," Donahue said.

Similarly, Donahue called for an expansion of the work four unions have begun in the Labor Leadership Institute for Workplace Change to appeal to the "millions of unorganized workers — especially white-collar and pink-collar workers — who need to be reassured that they can have an independent voice on the job without endless conflict with their employer."

At the same time, Donahue said, in the hostile environment symbolized by employer reliance on the permanent replacement of strikers, "we need to develop a grass-roots mobilization effort that will put the Christian Coalition and the National Federation of Independent Businessmen to shame," even if workers are never able to match the funding of those organizations.

"The most critical challenge facing unions today is organizing," the Sweeney slate said in a document called "A New Voice for American Workers: Rebuilding the American Labor Movement," released June 28.

The Sweeney slate proposes to:

- Provide emergency funding of "at least $20 million" for organizing, including a possible set-aside from per capita; a Sunbelt organizing fund; splitting field services from an AFL-CIO organizing department; a two-year program to train 1,000 new union organizers, with a special emphasis on women and minorities; and a declaration of next summer as "Union Summer to recruit 1,000 college students to volunteer for a massive national organizing blitz."
- Create a National Labor Political Training Center to recruit and train candidates and campaign directors, and to develop community organizing support. A Labor Center for Economic and Public Policy would "support the legislative agenda of the AFL-CIO and have its own polling operation to develop messages and themes for political and issue campaigns."
- "Coordinate all national contract campaign efforts by affiliates and the trade departments" through creation of a Center for Strategic Campaigns, and create a Strategic Campaign Fund and a strike support team "of top people from various unions who can be deployed into important strikes in early hours (even before a strike begins). . ."
- Refocus the Labor Institute of Public Affairs "from an institutional support organization to a proactive strategic operation" and revamp AFL-CIO publications to "make effective use of computer information services and other technologies."
- Internationally, create a Transnational Corporate Monitoring Project to "coordinate and assist the efforts of national union affiliates, their trade secretariats and other groups" with a goal of viewing "international efforts much more in terms of the self-interest of American workers."
- Change the constitution to expand the AFL-CIO Executive Council, with quarterly meetings to which heads of support groups and all "national union presidents not on the Council" are invited; create a new position of executive vice president; restructure the federation's trade and industrial departments; call an annual meeting of the AFL-CIO General Board; impose a retirement age of 70 for election to AFL-CIO general officer positions; stage annual meetings of state AFL-CIOs and local central bodies; and create a Young Workers' Task Force.
- Establish a Committee 2000 to "conduct a multi-year Strategic Planning Process to solicit ideas for change and to consider priorities."

Utility Workers fight corporate mentality

San Diego

Onerous new legislative and administrative proposals at the state and federal level were denounced by delegates of the Utility Workers' 25th constitutional convention.

The corporate mentality of downsizing is taking over the public utilities, and "deregulation and restructuring are completely destroying the industry," said President Marshall M. Hicks.

Proposals by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and state public utility commissions would cause further harm to workers, he said, as he urged his members to fight the proposals.

Hicks won re-election as president, as did John M. Walsh Jr. as secretary-treasurer and Donald E. Wightman as vice president.

Six new members were selected for the union's national board: Gerald Waters, James Moffett, Frederick Ricker, John Naylor, Robert Geist and John Moriarty.

More than 400 union members meeting June 21-24 passed 13 constitutional changes and 35 resolutions. Their actions included the elimination of the national executive vice presidency position and the establishment of an organizing fund.

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue spoke to the convention about the urgency of organizing, despite "the extraordinary obstacles that unorganized workers face" when business is "so determined to crush any independent voice for working people. Only in America does the law allow management free rein to terrorize workers who seek to stand up for themselves."

He credited The Philadelphia Inquirer with an apt description: "Organizing a union these days is like breeding pandas in captivity. If everything goes right, it can be done. Miracles do happen. But it's so difficult, so risky, so fraught with frustration and disappointment that fewer and fewer people are willing to try."

Delegates also agreed to a resolution to allow the union's executive board to reduce monthly per capita for members of a local union while that local is continuing organizing efforts and has not achieved majority status in a bargaining unit. They also supported an increase in the minimum wage, tax fairness through tax relief and a single-payer national health insurance plan.

The convention voiced opposition to the Republican assault on worker safety and health, the GOP balanced budget amendment and efforts to revise the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Other speakers included John Calhoun Wells, director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service; Industrial Union Department President Elmer Chatak; and Rep. Bob Filner (D-Calif.).

COURTS

Scab order case expedited

An appeals court cleared the way for opponents to challenge President Clinton's executive order barring federal contracts to companies that use scabs.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit directed the judge to expedite the hearings and to consider whether the order skews the bargaining process.

The suit was filed by the Chamber of Commerce, National Association of Manufacturers, American Trucking Association, Bridgestone/Firestone and Mosler Inc.

Under the order, federal contractors who hire permanent replacements could have their contracts terminated and be barred from future contracts or contract renewals until the labor dispute is resolved and the jobs of striking workers restored.

Despite the court challenge, the Labor Department's regulations for enforcing the order became effective June 26, when Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich warned Bridgestone/Firestone that it would be investigated.

Solidarity not illegal

In a victory for the Longshoremen, an appeals court overturned a National Labor Relations Board ruling that the union's call for solidarity with Japanese unions was an illegal secondary boycott.

Neither union "exercised any control over the other. If they were bound together at all, it was by a spirit of labor solidarity, but such a spiritual link is too frail to render one union the agent of another," said Judge Harry T. Edwards of the District of Columbia Circuit.

The case, ILA vs. NLRB, began in October 1990 when the union sent a letter to the Japanese dockworkers union announcing it was going to picket non-union stevedoring plants in Florida. The letter asked for the Japanese unions' support in denying the landing and unloading of the picketed products.

When Japanese unions convinced companies to ship to other Florida ports, three companies filed unfair labor practice charges against the ILA. The Reagan-Bush NLRB held in 1993 that the ILA had authorized the actions by the Japanese unions.

Disability cutoff allowed

In a reversal of 60 years of precedents, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that disabled workers' benefits could be cut off for reasons other than a change in health, including an increased wage-earning capacity.

The Longshore and Harbor Workers Compensation Act allows changes in benefits only if there is "change in conditions." The court ruled that the act was designed to compensate injured employees for their loss of the ability to earn wages. But if that condition changes, even if the employee's health does not, then the benefits can be modified.

The case, Metropolitan Stevedore Co. vs. Rambo, began when John Rambo injured his back and leg in 1980 while working for the company, suffering a one-fourth permanent partial disability. Because the injury cost him $120 a week in wages, a judge awarded him $80 a week, or two-thirds of his loss.

After the award, Rambo worked as a heavy lift truck operator and attended classes to become a crane operator. Although his physical condition did not improve, his wages jumped to about three times what they were before the injury. The company sued to cut off the benefits.

IBEW, US West settle

After numerous lawsuits, the Electrical Workers Local 1269 and US West Direct reached a settlement that would reinstate several workers with back pay.

The union and the company, a subsidiary of US West Communications, also set up an ombudsman review committee that would receive complaints from employees if management granted special employment preferences to union officials.

"I am pleased that this longstanding and complex labor relations matter has been resolved," said National Labor Relations Board General Counsel Fred Feinstein.

"The employees who were discharged have been made whole through reinstatement to their former positions with back pay, and the parties have established an effective mechanism to monitor and improve labor relations."



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Trade unionists demonstrate outside the Japanese embassy to protest the unfair treatment of Rubber Workers by Japanese-owned Bridgestone/Firestone Co. The demonstrations, held in Washington and at eight consulates around the country, were coordinated by the URW, Steelworkers and AFL-CIO Industrial Union Department. The protesters presented Japanese officials with letters outlining the workers' grievances against the giant tire maker. "The leaders of Japan's government should not allow (Bridgestone CEO) Yoichiro Kaizaki to act as a corporate renegade who is making his contempt for American workers become a sore spot between our countries," URW President Kenneth Coss said.

Waiting time issue gets a hearing

By David Kameras

The U.S. Supreme Court has decided to hear arguments from the Locomotive Engineers and the United Transportation Union that the time train crews spend waiting to be relieved should be treated as on-duty time.

Crew members who are prevented by law from working beyond 12 hours often must wait long periods, sometimes up to 10 hours, for a relief crew to show up and transport them to their end destination, the unions charge. Employers maintain that the wait time is "limbo" time, comparable to the "deadhead transportation" time spent being conveyed from the train.

Limbo is not on-duty time, nor is it off-duty time, since workers cannot use the time to rest.

Under an 88-year-old statute, train employees may not go on duty unless they have been off duty for at least eight hours in the preceding 24 hours. In addition, those who have been working for 12 hours must be given at least 10 hours off duty. At that point, they must stop the train and wait for a relief crew.

In 1992, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals agreed with the unions that the waiting time should be counted as on-duty hours, and the government applied the decision nationwide. But after nine railroads sued, the 7th Circuit reversed the decision, and the Federal Railroad Administration restricted the on-duty designation only to those states covered by the 9th Circuit.

Rail workers are responsible for their train while waiting for relief crews, and studies show that sleep deprivation and irregular work schedules can impair safe railroad operations. BLE and UTU have argued that the last court ruling places rail safety in jeopardy.

Commuter strike postponed

Meanwhile, 15 unions representing 4,900 workers at Metro-North Commuter Railroad in the Northeast have postponed plans to strike the carrier until July 15, unless they are confronted with a lockout or the imposition of contract terms by the rail company.

"The minute they impose, then there will be nothing running on Metro-North," said Transport Workers President Sonny Hall.

Although the unions had found the April 23 recommendations of a presidential emergency board, including a series of wage increases they called useful as a framework for negotiations. The Metropolitan Transportation Agency, the New York agency that manages Metro-North, chose not to seek appointment of a new board.

The M.T.A. wants a wage freeze placed on the workers, whose pay since 1983 has trailed that of their counterparts at the M.T.A.-managed Long Island Rail Road.

While legally entitled to strike as of June 22, the unions have sought to keep the talks going and to avoid disrupting the Special Olympics taking place in New Haven, Conn., July 1-9, an event expected to draw some 700,000 people.

"We are here today to challenge Metro-North and the M.T.A. to maintain the status quo through July 15 in order to let the Special Olympics go forward without any interruption of Metro-North's train service," the unions said. Otherwise, management "will bear the full responsibility for any subsequent actions the unions are forced to take to protect the interests of their members."

"We're asking people to take a clear look at the facts and decide who's right and who's wrong," Hall said.

Unions blast Conrail

In another development, Conrail announced it is laying off 590 employees, including 477 unionized workers, blaming the cuts on a recent downturn in the economy. Unionists are skeptical.

"I don't believe they are losing money," said Transportation Communications Chairman Tony Santoro. "They are just not making as much money as some people would like. They don't have any regard for the people who work for them."

Supreme Court allows union safety role

The U.S. Supreme Court refused to change a federal regulation that allows the Mine Workers to serve as the miners' representative during an official inspection of a non-union mine.

The court let stand a December 1994 ruling by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit that miners' "walkaround rights" under the Mine Safety and Health Act included the right to have any person or organization that represents two or more miners to participate in the inspection.

The case, Kerr-McGee Coal Corp. vs. Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission, began in June 1990 when seven miners employed at the company's non-union Jacobs Ranch mine in Wyoming designated two UMWA employees as their representatives during an MSHA inspection. One of the employees was involved in organizing the mine.

MSHA fined the company $300 for failing to post a notice that the UMWA employees had been designated to represent the miners in the inspection.

ECONOMY

Burgeoning trade deficit major threat to economy

By David Kameras

The merchandise trade deficit worsened sharply in April, reaching $12.2 billion after hitting an $11.3 billion shortfall in March.

Cumulatively, the deficit reached $47.9 billion from the first of the year, far exceeding the $36.9 billion scored at the same point in 1994, a year that busted trade deficit records.

"The huge merchandise trade deficit in April points to a continuing deterioration of the international trade position of the United States," said Mark Anderson, director of the AFL-CIO Task Force on Trade. "The persistence and magnitude of this country's trade deficit has played a major role in the low wages and job insecurity confronting American workers."

Feeding the trade crisis is the eagerness by U.S. corporations to find cheap labor abroad, Anderson pointed out. Nike, for example, subcontracts 100 percent of its production. While it directly employs 9,000 people, its subcontractors pay minimal wages to 75,000 workers scattered throughout the Pacific Rim — 25 percent in China alone.

With 98 planes worth $5.5 billion on Boeing's order books, four times that of a year ago, the company is cutting 12,000 domestic jobs this year. Meanwhile, a significant portion of the new 777 jetliner will be produced in China, a country in which Boeing has invested some $600 million. Parts for the 737 and 747 are produced jointly with Chinese companies.

The bilateral trade deficit with Japan actually narrowed somewhat, moving from $6.1 billion to $5.9 billion. However, new car imports from Japan jumped 9.5 percent, while exports dropped.

The auto trade figures "substantiate and support our concern with a continued closed market in Japan for autos and auto parts," said U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor.

Racing a June 28 deadline, Kantor succeeded in negotiating a deal to pry open those markets, a settlement hailed by President Clinton as "a great victory for the American people."

The agreement will increase the number of dealerships in Japan selling American cars by 200 next year and by 1,000 over five years. Further, Japanese purchases of U.S.-made auto parts will increase by nearly $9 billion in three years.

"The new agreement is a modest, yet important, step toward opening a true two-way trading relationship between our two nations," said UAW President Stephen P. Yokich.

The agreement was reached hours before the administration was poised to levy punitive tariffs on such luxury nameplates as Lexus and Infiniti in retaliation for Japan's highly restricted domestic markets for autos and auto parts. Overall, the United States imported more than twice as much from Japan as it exported, leaving a cumulative trade deficit $20.5 billion worse than a year ago.

Meanwhile, new car imports from Canada took a huge leap, rising from $5.3 billion to $8.4 billion, indicating that the problems engendered by the North American Free Trade Agreement do not come solely from the south.

In fact, Canada exports a whopping 24 percent of its gross domestic product to the United States.

Further, the merchandise trade deficit with Mexico was $1.5 billion, bringing the cumulative total for the year to $5.3 billion. At the same point last year, the United States enjoyed a cumulative trade *surplus* of $537 million.

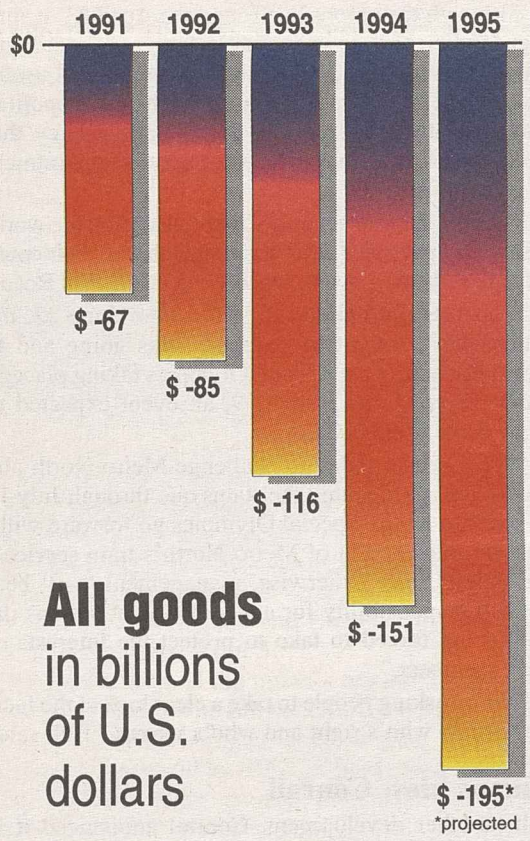
If current trends continue, the trade deficit with Mexico will result in the loss of 219,000 U.S. jobs in 1995, according to data compiled by Prof. Robert Scott of the University of Maryland's Center for International Business Education and Research.

The balance in trade in merchandise also worsened considerably with Western Europe (from a surplus of $10 million to a deficit of $418 million), China (with the deficit expanding from $1.8 billion to $2.3 billion), Singapore (from $130 million to $245 million) and Taiwan (from $549 million to $664 million).

During the first four months of the year, the United States ran up a net deficit in many industries in which it has historically dominated, including cars and trucks ($19.2 billion), clothing and footwear ($13.3 billion), data processing and office machines ($7 billion), electrical machinery ($5.7 billion), telecommunications equipment ($4.6 billion), iron and steel products ($3.1 billion), toys and sporting goods ($1.9 billion) and furniture ($1.7 billion).

DATA

U.S. trade deficit



The U.S. trade deficit in goods continues widening at a record pace — it is projected to reach $195 billion by year's end. In the first four months of the year, the shortfall in U.S. merchandise trade reached $54.2 billion, a 40 percent increase over a year earlier.

Merchandise trade deficit	
April	$12.2 billion
March	$11.3 billion
Worker compensation (private sector)	
March '95	$17.10 per hour
March '94	$17.57 per hour
Housing starts (adjusted)	
May	1.24 million units
April	1.26 million units
May '94	1.49 million units

AFL-CIO NEWSGRAFIC

Compensation on downward spiral

In new dramatic evidence that the economic recovery has been weighted at the top end, the size of the total American paycheck dropped by a record amount for the year ending in March.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that real hourly compensation in the private sector, including benefits, dropped to $17.10 an hour, compared with $17.57 a year earlier. The 2.7 percent drop was the largest since the government began tracking the data in 1987. Wages and salaries alone shrank by 24 cents to $12.25 an hour.

Benefit costs were 28.4 percent of total compensation, down from 28.9 percent.

Adding state and local governments into the equation, compensation averaged $18.38 per hour, down from $18.43 calculated in March 1994. A six-cent increase in wages and salaries, offset by an 11-cent decrease in benefit costs, failed to keep pace with inflation, and "the latest figures indicate that most occupational groups realized small declines or marginal gains," noted AFL-CIO chief economist Rudy Oswald.

Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich called the news "very disappointing."

"Despite a strong year of economic growth, improved productivity, a surging stock market and near record corporate profits, the wages of working Americans have suffered the largest decline since the series began eight years ago," he said.

"The interesting question is how long this can go on — how long can the economy do well when only the corporate sector is benefiting," asked Lawrence Chimerine, managing director of the Economic Strategy Institute. "At some point, if those profits don't begin to show up in wages, salaries and consumer spending, I think it's going to be very hard to sustain this recovery."

Reich agreed. "Consumers who don't have enough money to spend may not be able to keep the recovery going," he said. "Even more importantly, (the decline in compensation) signals a dangerous shift in the distribution of income from ordinary working Americans to the very wealthy, who own most of America's financial assets."

President Clinton spotlighted the problem at a June 27 conference in Portland, Ore., called to discuss how to bring prosperity to American workers. Washington state AFL-CIO President Richard Bender told Clinton about the fear workers have of losing their jobs and finding work that matches their former pay.

Clinton said that working conditions have changed significantly in the past two decades. He noted that wages have stagnated, workweeks have lengthened and, unlike 20 years ago, most laid-off workers are not rehired for their old jobs.

"How can anyone with a straight face propose a capital-gains tax cut when owners of capital are running off with these gains from workers?"

— Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich

"It is not enough for this country to produce impressive economic numbers," he said. "It must be manifest in the lives of the people of America."

Clinton proposed a number of steps, including developing school-to-work transition programs for students not bound for college; creating more export-oriented jobs, which he said have pay averaging 15 percent higher than other jobs; and supporting state-federal partnerships to improve work force training.

Reich said the new BLS data counters arguments for new tax breaks for investors. "This is the clearest evidence yet of the effects of trickle-down economics," he said. "How can anyone with a straight face propose a capital-gains tax cut when owners of capital are running off with these gains from workers?"

In addition, he criticized congressional efforts to slash funding for education and job training. "Both of these initiatives seem to me to be quite irrational in light of the widening gap between high-wage workers and owners of financial assets on one hand, and average working Americans and the working poor on the other."

Oswald called the decline in total compensation for union members "troubling."

"Union workers lost an average of 86 cents per hour worked out of their total compensation package, with 34 cents coming from wages and salaries and the remaining 52 cents from benefits," he said.

Nonetheless, the report showed that union membership clearly has its privileges. "Union workers still receive $6.14 more an hour in total compensation — $2.52 in wages and $3.64 in benefits," he said. Organized workers averaged $22.40 an hour, compared with $16.26 for their non-union counterparts. Benefits made up 35.7 percent of total compensation for union workers; for non-union, 26.8 percent.

Compensation continued to show substantial regional diversity, ranging from $15.89 in the South to $20.09 in the Northeast.

— David Kameras

World Bank says unions lift global prosperity

By David Kameras

A new report by the World Bank acknowledges that unions play a vital role in helping countries increase prosperity and opportunities for their workers, concluding that "collective bargaining is a good solution for setting wages and working conditions."

"Free trade unions are a cornerstone of any effective system of industrial relations that seeks to balance the need for enterprises to remain competitive with the aspirations of workers for higher wages and better working conditions," the World Bank said. "They have a non-economic role as well. Some unions have contributed significantly to their countries' political and social development."

"World Development Report 1995: Workers in an Integrating World," released June 29, supports the rights of workers throughout the world to form unions and bargain collectively.

Labor policy and unions remain central in a market-driven world and "governments need to set basic labor standards, deal with income insecurity and help the vulnerable," the multilateral financial instition stated.

"Governments have a distinct role in setting the legal and regulatory frameworks within which trade unions and firms can operate and in ensuring that those frameworks encourage their positive contributions to development," said World Bank President James D. Wolfensohn.

Specificially, the report called on governments to establish rules for labor-management negotiations, spelling out the rights of workers and firms, establishing dispute resolution mechanisms and promulgating basic health and safety regulations, which unions can monitor.

"Structural adjustment and the transition from central planning have often brought wrenching changes for workers," the report added. "But the costs lie in the disease, not the medicine. Effective reform brings gains for workers, and governments can reduce the costs of transition through supporting mobility, providing transfers and equipping workers for change."

Although wage and employment increases have been most noticeable in East Asia, labor relations have suffered, noted the World Bank.

"While common, poor labor relations — including the repression of unions — have not been universal, and are not key to East Asia's success," the report stated. "The economic and social costs of poorly functioning systems of industrial labor relations have been borne throughout the region and include labor-related violence, costly strikes and human rights abuses."

Unions are likely to have positive effects on productivity and equality when they operate in an environment in which product markets are competitive, collective bargaining occurs at the enterprise or plant level and labor laws protect the right of individual workers to join or not to join a union of their own choice, the report found.

While noting the positive impact of unions, the report rejects linkage of world trade transactions with protection of human rights and labor standards, including even standards for child labor.

It also supports decentralized bargaining at the enterprise level, a position at odds with a position held by most labor organizations — and by many employers too.

Bill Jordan, general secretary of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, said world labor does not agree with all of the bank's analysis or recommendations, "but the report contains a number of positive indications that will encourage us to continue the dialogue with the World Bank on the new policies for improving the quantity and quality of jobs worldwide."

NEWSMAKERS

Freedom fighter **Harry Wu** has been detained by Chinese officials who are reportedly "investigating the validity of his travel documents." Wu, who spent 19 years as a political prisoner in China's slave labor system, is a naturalized U.S. citizen who heads the Laogai Research Foundation's work on China's gulag. He was attempting to travel in China with a U.S. passport and a visa issued by the Chinese government that was supposed to be good through Sept. 11 of this year. The U.S. government strongly protested Wu's incarceration.

Jack Sheinkman, who is retiring as president of the Clothing and Textile Workers, was elected president of the Americans for Democratic Action. Sheinkman, chairman of the Amalgamated Bank of New York, is the first trade unionists to become ADA president.

John T. "Jack" Curran, director of the Laborers' legislative and political department, is retiring in July. He began his career in the early 1940s, organizing workers for the Mine Workers and later for the United Gas, Coke and Chemical Workers. He was elected vice-president of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers at its founding convention, after a merger he proposed. AFL-CIO President **George Meany** appointed Curran legislative representative to the AFL-CIO in 1957, and he also held legislative posts with the Building and Construction Trades Department and the National Coordinating Committee for Multiemployer Pension Plans.

Trade unionists **Morton Bahr, Steve Beckman, John S. Gaal and Ron Blackwell** have been appointed to the national advisory committee that advises the U.S. government on enforcement of NAFTA. A University of Maryland law professor, **Marley S. Weiss,** was named by Secretary of Labor **Robert Reich** to chair the commission. Bahr is president of the Communications Workers and Beckman, Blackwell and Gaal are staff members of the UAW, the Clothing and Textile Workers and the St. Louis Carpenters, respectively.

Reich also has moved two of his top managers to new positions. **Timothy M. Barnicle** moves from the policy and budget office to the Employment and Training Administration. **Cynthia A. Metzler** will fill his slot. Barnicle replaces **Doug Ross**, who resigned last month as assistant secretary of employment and training.

Jennifer Silk has been named to lead the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's ergonomics standard development. She replaces **Barbara Silverstein**, who resigned in May partly because of frustration over congressional efforts to kill the standard. For the past two years, Silk has worked to develop a standard to address musculoskeletal disorders.

Erin Eckles has joined the AFL-CIO Union Privilege staff as editor of Union Plus. Eckles was most recently with the American Nurses Association and worked previously for the Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers.

AWARDS

The keepers of archives for the **Electronic Workers** and the **Montana AFL-CIO** have been honored by their peers among the nation's librarians. The Special Collections and University Archives at Rutgers keeps the IUE records, and Butte-Silver Bow Public Archives does the same for the Montana AFL-CIO. They received the John Sessions Memorial Award, given annually by the Reference and Adult Services Divisions (RASD) of the American Library Association in honor of the former assistant director of education at the national AFL-CIO.

Folk singer **Pete Seeger** was presented with the Joe Hill Award by the Labor Heritage Foundation. Seeger, who began singing workers' songs with Woody Guthrie and the Weavers 50 years ago, has been a mainstay at the annual Great Labor Arts Festival at the George Meany Center for Labor Studies.

The Chicago AFL-CIO awarded **John Phelan** the William A. Lee Memorial Award for his professional success and contributions to the community as president of Operating Engineers Local 399. The award is named after a former president of the city federation.

DEATHS

CIO pioneer and UAW lobbyist **Bob Oliver** died of cancer June 24. He was 87.

A native of Texas, Oliver was a young college graduate when he became an oil field organizer, joining with Texas CIO director A.R. Hardesty to build the oil worker locals that grew into a CIO union in the 1930s. He came to Washington in the 1940s as a representative of the Textile Workers and served stints as a legislative representative of both the UAW and the AFL-CIO. He also was an assistant to UAW President Walter Reuther.

Oliver's wife of 45 years died in 1979 and he is survived by four children: Roberta Teel Oliver of Washington, Garrett McClellan Oliver and Bruce Lee Oliver of Nags Head, N.C., and longtime Democratic Party official Spencer Oliver.

Rose Hall, widow of the legendary Seafarers President Paul Hall, died June 21 in New York at age 72.

Paul Hall put together the maritime units that became the SIU before World War II and served as president of the union until his death in 1980. Like her husband, Rose Hall was known far beyond the ranks of the Seafarers because of the sharply tuned sense of solidarity that led to SIU assistance for workers everywhere — from New York City workers who were forming AFSCME units in the 1940s to the Farm Workers who were held in a death grip by the California growers in the the 1970s.

Rose Hall is survived by one daughter, Margo Hall O'Kane of Smallwood, N.Y., and one son, Max Siegel Hall of Alexandria, Va.

Gunnar A. Hallstrom, former president of the Pattern Makers League, died of congestive heart failure in Silver Spring, Md. He was 87.

A Swedish immigrant, Hallstrom settled in Chicago, where he became an apprentice and later a master pattern maker. From 1943 through 1959, Hallstrom was the union's midwest regional secretary-treasurer. He became president in 1959, a position he held until he retired in 1972.

The Pattern Makers merged with the Machinists in 1991.

UNION NEWS

Guild delegates vote merger

Delegates to The Newspaper Guild's convention voted unanimously to merge with the Communications Workers. The proposed merger will go to a membership referendum in September with results announced in October.

Members also will vote for officers in September. The convention nominated two for president — Secretary-Treasurer Linda Foley and TNG Local 3 President Barry Lipton of New York — and two for secretary-treasurer — Bernie Lunzer, executive secretary of the Twin Cities Local 2, and Larry Hatfield, TNG vice president from Northern California.

"I want this tough and proud union to get back into a position where we can say 'Hey, folks, we're nearly three quarters of a million strong . . . shove it,'" said Guild President Charles Dale. The Guild has 30,000 members and CWA more than 600,000.

Under the agreement, the Guild would affiliate with CWA in October and formally merge after its 1997 convention.

Earlier, the convention approved a proposal that would allow Canadian locals almost total autonomy while retaining linkage to international union. Canadian locals will decide on that proposal at the same time as they vote on the merger.

Metal Polishers set course

Nearly 50 delegates of the Metal Polishers gathered in Las Vegas June 5-8 to lay out the union's course for the next four years.

Glenn Holt was re-elected as president and secretary-treasurer, along with the eight-member executive board. Delegates also adopted small per capita increases.

Metal polishers work in a variety of industries, from coating bathroom faucets and auto parts to making caskets and working on boat propellers. In addition, the members make many of the badges and pins that fellow trade unionists use during conventions and campaigns.

Arkansas re-elects Becker

Bill Becker was re-elected president of the Arkansas AFL-CIO at the state federation's 20th biennial convention. Delegates also elected Don Beavers as secretary-treasurer and Jean Lee as the first female vice president.

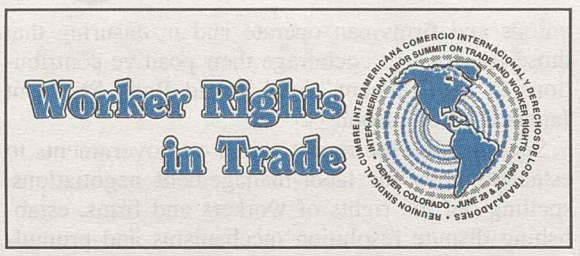
Beavers replaces Jim Clark, who withdrew his nomination for secretary-treasurer. Becker has been president of the federation since 1964.

Delegates approved a number of resolutions, including one increasing the per capita by 10 cent for special projects. Other resolutions called for the implementation of motor voter legislation and public employee collective bargaining.

Speakers included Wayne E. Glenn, president of the Paperworkers; Gov. Jim Guy Tucker; Richard Walsh, director of AFL-CIO COPE; and Norman Hill, president of the A. Philip Randolph Institute.

Labor seeks All-American goals

Workers demand linkage between rights and trade



By David Kameras

Union leaders from throughout the hemisphere gathered in Denver June 28-29 to demand that worker rights be made an integral part of upcoming trade agreements.

Representatives of labor organizations from 23 countries insisted, in a statement prepared for trade ministers also meeting in Denver, that governments must halt the "race to the bottom," with worker rights and standards sacrificed at the altar of "free trade."

Opening the conference's plenary session, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue declared, "There can be no discussion of the economic destiny of the Americas — there can be no effective and humane planning of our collective future — unless the needs, the interests and the rights of working people are taken into account."

The biggest enemy of the hemisphere's workers are "the doctrine of neo-liberalism and the mystique that surrounds it," an ideology based on unregulated markets and free trade, he said.

"There is a very powerful myth in our hemisphere that we can trust free trade, and its domestic counterparts like privatization and deregulation, to bring prosperity to all," Donahue said. "That myth often collides head-on with reality."

The trade ministers, meeting June 30 to lay the groundwork for a Free Trade Area of the Americas agreement (FTAA), were told that such a pact must guarantee freedom of association and the right to bargain collectively, prohibit forced labor and discrimination in employment and promote standards on occupational health and safety, hours of work and child labor.

Specifically, government officials were called upon to:

- Affirm that respect for and strengthening of worker rights and labor standards are essential to the success of hemispheric economic integration, and must be considered and included in the current trade negotiations process.
- Plan a meeting of labor ministers, trade union officials and business representatives to discuss these issues within the framework of FTAA, leading to creation by labor ministers of a permanent labor commission.
- Strengthen the mechanisms of consultation in each country and subregional trading group to assure trade union participation on matters relating to economic integration.

Conferees took the trade ministers to task for using as a starting point in their deliberations a draft declaration that "barely pays lip service to the needs and interests of working people — worker rights, adjustment policies for those hit hard by trade, a just share in economic expansion."

"Freedom of association and the right to organize and bargain collectively, as well as minimum workplace standards in such areas as safety and health and child labor are ignored," they complained. By contrast, "Intellectual property rights, investments and other items on the corporate wish list are directly addressed."

"For more than two decades, working people in the Americas have seen our standard of living fall and poverty and inequality increase as our countries enter the global economy," the conference stated. "Markets cannot long expand nor business prosper if our people lack the purchasing power for anything beyond their most basic needs."

Donahue cited Mexico as an example of "leaving workers to the tender mercies of a free-trade regime with no effective protection of workers' rights." Mexico's economy has been in a free fall since implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

"Increases in trade can sometimes create wealth," Donahue said. "But all our experience as trade unionists tells us that the best way to ensure that the new wealth is distributed equitably and honorably — indeed, the only way — is to guarantee that workers may associate freely in independent trade unions and that they will have a minimum standard of decency in the work place."

Participants also heard from Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich, Commerce Secretary Ron Brown and Trade Representative Mickey Kantor — all of whom echoed President Clinton's pledge to seek a closer link between trade and worker rights than has been achieved in past agreements.

Donahue praised the administration's efforts in that regard during a meeting with reporters the week before the summit. "I think those four people are the principal actors in these negotiations, and they're all supporters of the inclusion of worker rights," he said.

Some members of Congress have indicated they will seek to amend legislation granting the administration fast-track authority, a key step in eventual enactment of a trade pact with Chile, in order to exclude worker rights.

"I expect a very strong fight by the administration to protect the inclusion of worker rights in all of the legislation in which it currently exists and in fast track," Donahue said. "If that is not included, we will not support fast track."

More than 100 labor, environmental and other citizen groups are united in opposing a repeat of the NAFTA experiment, which in its first 500 days prompted 60,000 U.S. workers to file for special government assistance, a fraction of those actually displaced.

"Clearly, NAFTA is not the answer," Mark Anderson, director of the AFL-CIO Task Force on Trade, told the House Ways and Means subcommittee on trade. "Negotiations with Chile provide the opportunity to make necessary improvements and reduce the likelihood of the Mexican tragedy being repeated."

Speakers at the Denver conference also included Luis Anderson, general secretary of Organizacion Regional Inter-Americana de Trabajadores (ORIT), and Chilean Labor Minister Jorge Arrate MacNiven.

Sprint, Sony sideswiped by NAFTA

Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich has agreed to ministerial consultations with Mexico in connection with the closing of a Sprint subsidiary on the eve of a union election there.

At the same time, Mexico agreed to meet with workers illegally fired for union activities at Sony's Magneticos de Mexico plant in Nuevo Laredo, and will conduct a review of how independent trade unions are registered. The report is due in 180 days.

The Mexico action is the result of ministerial consultations, which are the highest level of enforcement contained in the labor side agreement of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Communications Workers President Morton Bahr applauded Reich's decision to consult on the Sprint case.

"Sprint's anti-worker practices here in the U.S. have been nothing short of egregious, and it is small wonder that other countries such as Mexico are concerned about the spread of such abuses around the world," he said.

The CWA was involved in an organizing drive at Sprint's La Conexion Familar facility, which fired nearly 200 Spanish-speaking workers last year in California, days before a representation election was to be held.

The complaint was filed in Mexico by the Telephone Workers Union of the Republic of Mexico on behalf of the CWA.

Meanwhile, the economic crisis that has rocked Mexico in the wake of NAFTA's implementation has emboldened business interests there to close in for the kill.

The leader of the group that represents businesses before the government says the disaster has weakened labor unions, making this an ideal time to call for changes in the nation's labor laws.

Hector Larios Santillan, president of the Business Coordinating Council, wants more "flexibility" in workplace job standards, greater ability to replace workers with high-technology machinery and imposition of open shops.

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Clothing and Textile Workers President Jack Sheinkman and Ladies' Garment Workers President Jay Mazur celebrate their unions' votes to UNITE. **See UNION NEWS, Page 7.**

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ECONOMY

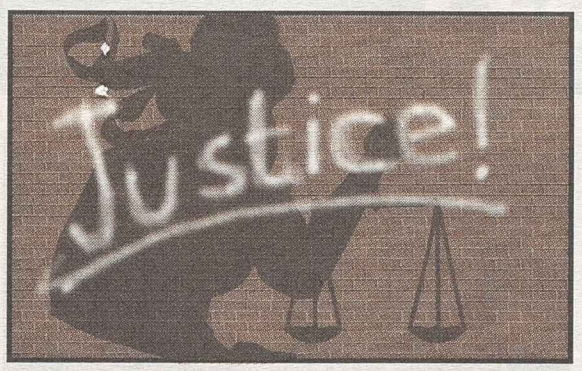
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Supreme Court rulings galvanize labor's fight for civil rights. **See story, Page 5.**

AFL-CIO NEWS

VOLUME 40, NUMBER 15 JULY 17, 1995

Congress raises stakes with new attacks

By Mike Hall

Immediately after a vigorous grass-roots action program by workers and their unions, congressional Republicans returned from the July 4th recess with more vicious attacks against working families.

The House Appropriations subcommittee on labor, health and education voted huge cuts in job safety programs (**see story, Page 3**), as well as job training and education. It also cut the funding and enforcement powers of the National Labor Relations Board, trying to restrict the NLRB's ability to seek restraining orders for egregious unfair labor practices.

Earlier, the full committee had launched a direct assault on collective bargaining with an amendment that would repeal Section 13(c) of the Federal Transit Act, stripping bargaining rights from some 200,000 transportation workers.

With these actions, House Republicans showed "their contempt for working men and women," AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue said. "The AFL-CIO will continue to fight the Republican attempts to destroy the laws and programs on which working families depend."

That fight escalated to 29 congressional districts over the July 4th recess with a variety of activities under the federation's Stand UP banner. In response to an expanded media campaign, more than 6,000 calls were made to the AFL-CIO's congressional hotline to protest the slew of anti-worker legislation.

Radio ads tailored for 14 Republican districts were aired during the break, along with customized local television ads in six more districts. Nationally, AFL-CIO radio spots aired on Jim Hightower's commentaries and TV ads were seen nationwide on CNN and CNBC.

In Chicago, union members demonstrated outside Republican Rep. Michael Flanagan's office after he refused to meet with them to discuss labor issues.

Union members joined Mine Workers President Richard Trumka in a York, Pa., rally to protest House Economic and Educational Opportunities Chairman William F. Goodling's support of the Republican budget plan, which would cut Medicare and education programs in order to pay for a tax cut for the wealthy and big corporations.

"We owe it to the working people of Pennsylvania to stand up to Bill Goodling and Newt Gingrich and all the rest of the right-wing, union-bashing, nickel-and-diming, tax-swindling hacks in Washington, D.C.," Trumka said.

The amendment to repeal Section 13(c), a blatant

Continued on Page 3



Mike Osborn

Delegates to the hemispheric trade union summit in Denver rally outside the ministerial meeting June 30.

Workers demand say in trade pacts

By David Kameras

Trade unionists from throughout the hemisphere protested the slight of worker rights in a ministerial agreement to create a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA).

Governments should address worker rights with the same vigor with which they are pursuing free trade agreements, and workers should have a say in how the agreements are achieved, trade unionists declared in a Denver summit prior to the conference of trade ministers.

The declaration by the trade ministers seeking to create a hemispheric free trade zone by the year 2005 mentioned worker rights only in terms of an annex, and labor officials were intent on raising the level of protection to workers to that routinely offered businesses, such as intellectual property rights.

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue denounced efforts by business interests to portray the fight for worker rights as "protectionism in another guise." Labor federations from 23 of the 34 affected countries came together "to say it is the workers of the hemisphere who are demanding this," he said.

"By avoiding the issue altogether, the trade ministers essentially are ensuring that the new Free Trade Agreement of the Americas doesn't put any restrictions on how businesses treat their employees," Donahue said.

"As the mad scramble to make a buck intensifies, big corporations will be under increasing pressure to cut costs in any way they can," he said. "Without basic rules for protecting workers' lives, some companies will go to any lengths to boost the bottom line — even putting their employees' lives and safety at risk."

Approximately 75,000 U.S. manufacturing jobs were lost in two months this year, and 1.2 million have been lost since the beginning of the last round of multilateral talks under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade in 1986, noted Mark Anderson, director of the AFL-CIO Task Force on Trade. Worker input is vital if their interests are to be protected, he said.

"We are here to let them know that workers deserve and demand a place in trade negotiations," Anderson warned.

Continued on Page 4

'Brutal' Staley contract offer is voted down

Workers target Pepsi in escalated campaign

By James B. Parks

Rejecting the company's latest offer, locked-out Paperworkers at A.E. Staley escalated their campaign for a fair contract by seeking to persuade customers, especially Pepsi, to drop the corn sweetener made by the company.

"Our members have demonstrated that they are committed to this fight, and that we will not allow Staley to starve us into submission," said David Watts, president of UPIU Local 7837 in Decatur, Ill. "By rejecting this brutal, unsatisfactory offer, we have shown that we are serious."

The 318-241 vote against the contract came after the union negotiating committee and executive board condemned the company for continuing to demand the right to unlimited subcontracting as well as 12-hour rotating shifts, Watts said.

In other Staley developments, the locked-out workers got the support of federal officials in pursuing charges that police violated their civil rights in a June 1994 pepper-gassing of peaceful demonstrators. And the Justice Department confirmed an investigation of price-fixing by Staley and three other firms that dominate the world's sale of fructose.

The 760 Staley employees, formerly Allied Industrial Workers before the union merged with UPIU, were locked out on June 27, 1993, after workers balked at the concessionary demands by Staley, a subsidiary of London-based conglomerate Tate and Lyle. They were replaced by scabs.

The workers are determined to gain a fair contract even though the lockout is taking its toll, Watts said. Many of the workers are hurting. Most receive only $60 a week from the union's strike funds. "Several hundred are without health care coverage," he added. Staley workers were the first locked-out employees in Illinois to receive unemployment insurance benefits, but those benefits expired after 26 weeks.

"Lots of the workers are losing their homes. It's tough to watch and still believe that the fight is worth

Continued on Page 5

ORGANIZING

Chiropractors join OPEIU

More than 100 New York chiropractors are now members of the Office and Professional Employees, joining OPEIU Local 64, the National Union of Chiropractic Physicians. The local is charged with organizing medical professionals on a nationwide scale.

"There are 500 potential members of the chiropractors' local in New York City alone, 4,000 in New York state and over 55,000 nationally, so potential gains for OPEIU are large," said Jay Porcaro, the union's organizing director.

The chiropractors recognized the legislative clout that a union would offer. "As union membership increases as a percentage of the work force, the effectiveness of unions on the job and in the political process also increases," said OPEIU President Michael Goodwin.

OPEIU has organized a number of specialty medical professionals, including hypnotists.

Beverly Homes cited again

A National Labor Relations Board administrative law judge recommended that a corporatewide cease-and-desist order be issued against Beverly-operated nursing homes for unfair labor practices.

ALJ Lawrence W. Cullen ordered the nursing home chain to "remedy the suppression" of its employees' rights to organize. Through its corporate office, Beverly was "closely monitoring organizing and labor relations policies of its facilities and quickly dispatching human resources personnel" to workers' homes where there were organizing attempts, he said.

Cullen also recommended that the company be ordered to bargain with employees at a nursing home in East Moline, Ill., and that new elections be held at nursing homes in Douglasville, Ga., Panama City, Fla., and Napoleon, Ohio.

This is the third case in which an ALJ has ruled against the nursing home chain. Known as "Beverly III," the case involves unfair labor practice charges at 11 homes in several states, as well as objections to pending elections based on alleged unfair labor practices.

USWA adds ice cream

Employees at the Good Humor/Breyers ice cream plant in Hagerstown, Md., voted 224-116 for Steelworkers representation.

"The workers were fed up with being treated with little or no respect, such as being told to look for another job if they complained about conditions," said Gene Door from USWA District 8. "Wages were low, benefits inferior and seniority meaningless."

AFSCME wins at USDA

AFSCME Council 26 won a representational election among non-professional employees of the Rural Utilities Service (RUS), a new agency created by the Department of Agriculture reorganization.

The 55-35 win was the council's fifth victory in the department in the past two years. "RUS employees voted for AFSCME knowing that the union would give them a voice in the massive reorganization facing USDA, and would also be a vehicle to defend their interests on Capitol Hill," said Phyllis Dixon, an AFSCME organizer.

China jails 'conscience' Harry Wu

By Michael Byrne

Harry Wu, who emerged after 19 years in China's labor camps determined to tell the world about that system of forced labor, has been arrested in China and charged with "stealing state secrets."

Wu, a naturalized American citizen, was held incognito for weeks by Chinese authorities even though he legally entered China with a U.S. passport bearing his American name, Peter H. Wu. He could face the death penalty if China prosecutes him as a U.S. spy, a charge the Clinton administration has strenuously denied.

Wu has embarrassed China's autocratic rulers over the past several years with personal accounts, including video and still photography, of China's "laogai" — re-education through forced labor — system for political prisoners. Wu spent 19 years in those labor camps when he spoke out against the Soviet Union's invasion of Hungary in the 1950s.

Working with Jeffrey Fiedler, secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO's Food and Allied Services Trades Department, Wu also has shown that China uses forced labor to produce goods for export to the United States, despite a memorandum of understanding it signed with the Clinton administration to end the practice.

Wu has provided indisputable evidence in hearings before Congress that these goods are being sold in American stores and, in 1992, appeared at a Wal-Mart shareholders meeting to urge the retailer to investigate buying practices and ensure that forced labor is not used to make products it sells.

"Harry Wu has been like a nagging conscience to the Chinese dictators," said Fiedler, who is a director of Wu's Laogai Research Foundation. "These trumped-up charges reflect their fear of the truth, which Harry has fought to publicize over the years."

Unionists first heard Wu's story in the Dec. 10, 1990, AFL-CIO News preview of his 1991 book, "Laogai: The Chinese Gulag," which documented the network of more than 1,000 slave labor camps throughout China. His investigations also have been aired nationally on CBS-TV's "60 Minutes" and NBC-TV's "Dateline" programs.

Wu is being held in Wuhan, a city in the central province of Hubei, where he met July 10 with U.S. Consul-General Arturo Macias. Macias reported that Wu said he has not been mistreated by his jailers, but he was prohibited from talking about the charges against him.

His detention has raised a cry from many quarters of the United States, from both Democrats and Republicans in Congress and from editorial writers across the country.



Bill Burke\Page One Photography

Harry Wu and Jeffrey Fiedler of the AFL-CIO appear at a 1994 congressional hearing.

A resolution to end China's most-favored-nation trading status gained momentum in the House and probably will pass if Wu is not released, said Rep. Barney Frank (D-Mass.), a leader in the effort to end the trade preference for China.

Human rights organizations have urged the Clinton administration to cancel an upcoming trade mission by Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown and a planned trip by Hillary Rodham Clinton to represent the United States at the United Nations Conference on Women in September. The AFL-CIO has opposed U.S. participation in the conference because of the poor treatment of women in China.

Under Chinese law, Wu could be tried on espionage charges in secret, without a public hearing or a proper defense. He could be sentenced to death.

Garment makers to curtail child labor

Bangladesh garment makers agreed to phase out child labor, thanks to the efforts of the AFL-CIO-backed Child Labor Coalition, which had mounted a boycott of the child-made products.

A memorandum of understanding that would ban employers from hiring children under the age of 14 was signed July 5 by the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association. It was worked out by the International Labor Organization and UNICEF, with cooperation from the Bangladesh government and the American Embassy in Bangladesh.

The agreement also calls for transferring existing child workers under 14 from garment factories to schools, ensuring school placement prior to employment dismissals and providing stipends to families as compensation for the loss of child-produced income.

"The Child Labor Coalition is pleased at the successful conclusions of the negotiations," said Pharis Harvey, CLC's co-chair. "Upon the successful implementation of the agreement, the Bangladesh garment industry will have set an important precedent for the country's development and an example for other developing countries."

The CLC began its boycott on May 20 after BGMEA tried to renege on its original pledge to sign the agreement.

The CLC is a Washington-based coalition of more than 40 labor, religious, consumer and human rights groups that has taken a pro-active stance in eliminating child labor in the United States and abroad.

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Director of Information: Rex Hardesty

Editor: Michael Byrne

Assistant Editors: Candice Johnson, David Kameras, Colleen M. O'Neill, James B. Parks

Staff Writers: Muriel H. Cooper, Mike Hall, Sharolyn A. Rosier

Graphics/Layout: Stan Hitt, Hindi M. Fracasse

AFL-CIO Headquarters: 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006
Telephone: (202) 637-5010
CompuServe: 71112,53

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Panel approves massive cuts in safety programs

By Colleen M. O'Neill

House budget cutters will leave workers to pay the price as they brutally cut back on funds for vital government job safety agencies.

The House Appropriations subcommittee on labor, health and education on July 11 proposed cuts in fiscal 1996 funding of 7.7 percent for the Mine Safety and Health Administration, 15.5 percent for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and 25 percent for the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, the only government agency responsible for job safety research.

Also notable was the tremendous cut in OSHA's federal enforcement program — nearly $48 million less was allocated for salaries and expenses, compared with this year's funding levels. The only portion of OSHA's budget to see an increase over fiscal year 1995 was compliance assistance, with $8.6 million in additional funds.

The cut in enforcement, coupled with the increase in compliance funds, mirrors the intent of the legislation recently introduced by Rep. Cass Ballenger (R-N.C.) to remake OSHA as a consultant to employers.

Committee Chairman John E. Porter (R-Ill.) was determined to drastically cut funding despite testimony from the business community last month that strong enforcement of tough regulations was necessary to provide effective protection for workers.

The appropriations measure also included a provision to prohibit OSHA from issuing a standard on ergonomics, and language to prevent implementation of President Clinton's executive order banning the use of striker replacements.

Meanwhile, the Senate took up S. 343, a regulatory reform measure put forth by Majority Leader Robert J. Dole (R-Kan.)

The measure "represents an overzealous approach to regulatory reform and is a smoke screen for an all-out assault on worker protections and safeguards," said AFL-CIO Legislative Director Peggy Taylor.

While professing to cut red tape, Dole's bill would:

- Create a regulatory obstacle course of cost-benefit analyses and risk assessments that would virtually halt the development of new regulations by OSHA, MSHA and other such agencies.
- Impose "one-size-fits-all" requirements on federal agencies, and impede efforts to address emerging issues with new standards.
- Give special access to special interests by allowing parties with a financial stake in regulations the opportunity to sit on peer review panels that will assess the validity of proposals.
- Over-politicize the rulemaking process by subjecting agency regulation to congressional review.

The Senate on July 11 agreed to raise the bill's application threshold to those regulations that have an impact of $100 million or more, and passed a measure stating nothing in the legislation should be "construed to override any statutory requirement, including health, safety and environmental requirements."

The AFL-CIO said that left the measure still far from acceptable.

"These amendments make a bad bill marginally better," said Peg Seminario, the federation's director of job safety and health, "but the bill still threatens workers' health and safety on the job.

"This direct assault on workers, coupled with the House budget cuts and Ballenger's bill, points to the need for workers to tell Congress in no uncertain terms this is not the kind of change they voted for last November," she said.

Members of Congress need to be told of the disastrous consequences for working Americans contained in Ballenger's bill, H.R. 1834, Seminario said. It "turns OSHA into an advice agency for those companies interested in voluntarily complying with safety suggestions. It presumes that employers will act responsibly on their own and in the best interests of their workers."

"You need only to look at recent history — the tragic fire in Hamlet, N.C., four years ago that claimed 25 lives in Ballenger's own state — to see that would not be the case with many employers."

Workers used the July 4th recess to lobby members of Congress to oppose H.R. 1834. Petitions, postcards and other campaign material are available from the AFL-CIO Department of Occupational Safety and Health.

In addition, the AFL-CIO has been working with its allies in the Citizens for Sensible Safeguards coalition to fight the congressional initiatives.

The group released the report "Special Access for Special Interests" July 12 to spotlight the efforts of corporate interests to shape Congress — and the laws passed by Congress — so they are allowed to maintain profits at the expense of people.

Besides releasing the report, coalition activities have included news conferences with lawmakers and victims of lax regulation.

'Corrections Day' puts worker safety at risk

The Fire Fighters were on hand July 11 to rebut House Speaker Newt Gingrich's mechanism to cut all rules and regulations deemed "dumb" by deregulatory-crazed Republicans.

"Corrections Day," held the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month, allows limited debate controlled by Gingrich allies and requires a three-fifths majority for approval of a proposal.

One of the initial proposals considered for the "Corrections Day" calendar was H.R. 1783, a bill to overturn the "buddy system" of firefighting — two people inside and two people outside — that has saved thousands of lives of firefighters and citizens over the past 25 years.

"This requirement is based on basic firefighting procedure to ensure accountability and immediate rescue when required," Harold A. Schaitberger, executive assistant to IAFF President Alfred K. Whitehead, told members of the Economic and Educational Opportunities work force protections subcommittee.

"It is also based on common sense," he said. "If there are two firefighters inside a burning building when a roof caves in, at least two firefighters are required to assist and/or rescue them."

Schaitberger cited fires in Pittsburgh, San Francisco and Seattle where the two-in/two-out buddy system might well have prevented casualties and fatalities.

"People in Washington tend to talk in abstracts and theoreticals. They use phrases like 'over-regulation,' 'unfunded mandates,' and 'getting government off our backs,'" he said. "But those phrases ring hollow to our nation's firefighters, who are being told that the government no longer is committed to their safety."

Other measures considered by the subcommittee concerned a weakening of rules prohibiting adolescents from working with paper-baling machines, which has been a concern of the Food and Commercial Workers, and a proposal to exempt court reporters from the Fair Labor Standards Act for transcriptions performed outside regular working hours.

— Colleen M. O'Neill

GOP steps up attack, targets basic labor laws

Continued from Page 1

assault on basic labor rights in the transportation sector, brought a protest from a coalition of moderate Republicans led by Rep. Joseph M. McDade (Pa.) and Rep. Don Young (Alaska), who wrote House Speaker Newt Gingrich urging him to help remove the provision when the bill reaches the floor.

The House Appropriations Committee on June 30 voted 25-23 to repeal the provision, with four Republicans joining all the Democrats on the committee in voting against the amendment. Repeal of Section 13(c) could mean the nullification of contracts covering tens of thousands of transit workers in the 20 states that do not otherwise allow public-sector employees to bargain collectively.

"The ramifications of this repeal provision on collective bargaining rights as well as existing labor-management agreements are far too serious to attach to an appropriations bill," the letter said.

"Section 13(c) can be reformed in a manner that addresses the transit industry's legitimate concerns, while at the same time preserving the important worker rights embodied in this program," the GOP members said.

AFL-CIO Legislative Director Peggy Taylor noted that "the program has served the public by bringing about remarkable labor relations stability as the transit industry has undergone dramatic changes. Section 13(c) has been an important instrument in helping the transit industry and the communities it serves in this period of change."

The attack by the appropriations subcommittee on the NLRB's ability to request Section 10(j) injunctions would affect the most serious cases of unfair labor practices, such as the firing of employees during an organizing drive. Although the injunctions are not assured, the subcommittee voted to make it more difficult for the NLRB to even request them, requiring a four-fifths vote of the board, instead of the current three-fifths.

A second NLRB amendment requires the board to allow the party against whom the injunction is sought to see the board's entire file on the case. A company could gather names of all the workers who spoke to the NLRB, even though they might not be witnesses in the case.

That information easily could be used to retaliate against the worker.

The subcommittee doubled the NLRB budget cut, from 15 percent to 30 percent.

Along with massive cuts in the OSHA budget, the subcommittee cut $3.9 billion from education, including the termination of President Clinton's Goals 2000 program.

It also voted to reduce funding for various job training and summer jobs programs, and drastically cut vocational and adult education programs and Head Start.

In addition, the subcommittee rejected an amendment that would have restored some funding for enforcement of Davis-Bacon Act standards.



Clark Productions

Unionists rally outside the Chicago office of Rep. Michael Flanagan (R) during the July 4th recess.

Unionists take minimum wage fight to states

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

While the Clinton administration's proposal to raise the minimum wage languishes in Congress, unionists have taken the battle to state legislatures. But state and local officials, like congressional leaders, generally have been less than receptive.

The problem was dramatically clear at the recent U.S. Conference of Mayors in Miami, where labor scrambled to beat back a policy resolution that sought to wire around the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Introduced by Mayors Richard Daley of Chicago and Robert Isaac of Colorado Springs, Colo., the resolution sought a legislative reversal of the 1985 Supreme Court decision, Garcia vs. San Antonio Metropolitan Transit Authority, which upheld minimum wage overtime protections for state and local government employees.

The AFL-CIO Office of State Government Liaison contacted central labor councils in some 30 cities where mayors supported the resolution, which eventually was tabled on a 48-46 vote.

"Unfortunately, it's Democrats who are supporting this stuff," said Al Bilik, president of the AFL-CIO Public Employee Department. "The fact that the vote was so close is a sign of what might be to come."

But labor is keeping the heat on. Central Utah AFL-CIO President Calvin J. Noyce, along with Gordon Ottley, president of AFSCME Local 1004, asked Salt Lake City Mayor Dee Dee Cordinni, an opponent of the resolution, to conduct a study on overtime protections for public employees.

In other states, workers are having some success convincing legislatures that state minimum wage rates should be increased.

In Massachusetts, the state House passed 122-27 a bill that would raise the minimum wage by $1, from $4.25 to $5.25 by October 1996.

"It took a coalition of unions and community groups to get it passed," said Massachusetts AFL-CIO President Joseph Faherty. "When things don't happen in Washington, they must happen in the states." A much closer vote is expected in the state Senate, Faherty said.

In Minnesota, three minimum wage bills may never see the light of day because of a threatened veto by Republican Gov. Arne Carlson and heavy business opposition.

Carlson has, however, taken one action the state AFL-CIO applauds — making firms account for their "corporate welfare" handouts that don't produce any jobs.

"Hopefully, there will be some coordination," said Minnesota AFL-CIO President Bernard L. Brommer. "This money is predicated on businesses creating jobs and if not, they will have to pay the money back. The working people of Minnesota have been taxed for years to support corporate welfare to promote job growth."

In Wisconsin, the House passed an amendment designed to nullify a court victory by the Service Employees that upheld a state "minimum living wage" higher than the minimum wage rate of $4.25 an hour.

But Montanans aren't waiting on the state legislature. The Montana Committee for an Effective Legislature, a statewide political action committee representing labor, environmentalists, lawyers, the poor, women, native Americans and senior citizens, is gathering signatures for a ballot initiative to raise that state's minimum wage by $2 an hour by the year 2000.

"We are taking a bold new challenge, one that is long overdue and vital to Montana's future and economy," said MontCEL President Eugene Fenderson, business manager of the Montana District Council of Laborers. "This state has the fourth-fastest growth in average pay, but our overall pay ranks 47th in the nation."

The "2 by 2000" initiative seeks to boost Montana's minimum wage by 50 cents each year for four years, bringing the minimum wage to $6.25.

Drop in jobless conceals big loss in manufacturing

By David Kameras

Unemployment dropped a slim 0.1 percent in June, reaching 5.6 percent, reflecting growth in services and the construction industries.

But these gains masked a big loss of 40,000 manufacturing jobs. Over the past three months, the manufacturing sector has lost 140,000 jobs.

In fact, had the labor force participation rate not dropped by an identical 0.1 percent, the unemployment rate would have remained the same.

"The overall picture is still one of stagnant income and slow growth in jobs," said Rudy Oswald, director of the AFL-CIO Economic Research Department. "Weekly earnings nearly recovered to their April level as a result of a small gain in average hourly earnings and a rebound in weekly hours."

Before the unemployment figures were released, the continued fear of a recession prompted the Federal Reserve Board to lower its key interest rate by 0.25 percent, to 5.75 percent.

Indeed, as the Big Bank took its action, the Commerce Department announced that its index of leading indicators fell 0.2 percent in May, following drops of 0.6 percent in April, 0.4 percent in March and 0.3 percent in February. This marks the longest string of consecutive drops since the 1989 recession.

Even financial industry analysts admitted the danger of recession from previous, too-abrupt Federal Reserve crackdowns on the money supply.

"The economy is managing to stay on its feet, but it's a real battle," said Robert Dederick, an economist with Northern Trust.

Although 7.4 million people were officially unemployed in June, they were joined by 1.6 million who had unsuccessfully searched for work and 4.4 million part-time workers wanting full-time jobs, for a total of 13.4 million affected by partial or total unemployment.

Dry weather helped boost construction jobs by 42,000, and gains also were posted in government (35,000), retail trade (30,000) and transportation and public utilities (20,000).

From May to June, unemployment rose for adult women (4.8 percent to 5 percent), African-Americans (9.9 percent to 10.6 percent) and African-American teenagers (30.5 percent to 36.8 percent). The rate improved for adult men (5.1 percent to 4.8 percent), teenagers as a group (17.6 percent to 16.4 percent) and Hispanics (10 percent to 9 percent).

Of 11 large states, unemployment rose in Florida (5.1 percent to 5.3 percent), Massachusetts (5 percent to 5.6 percent), Michigan (5.7 percent to 6.2 percent), New Jersey (6.5 percent to 6.6 percent), North Carolina (4.3 percent to 4.4 percent), Ohio (4.7 percent to 4.8 percent), Pennsylvania (5.7 percent to 6.2 percent) and Texas (6 percent to 6.3 percent).



Mike Osborn

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue confers with U.S. Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich during a break in the summit of hemispheric trade union leaders held June 29 in Denver.

Trade ministers slight worker rights

Continued from Page 1

Unless a new agreement "is set up under the terms of all the people of the two continents, the trade ministers ought not to waste their time and effort," added Bill Jordan, secretary general of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

At a rally following the summit, Luis Anderson, general secretary of the ICFTU's Inter-American Regional Organization of Workers (ORIT), read a letter to the trade ministers signed by all of the labor leaders indicating their dismay "that the declaration and work program you will consider . . . ignores the interest of workers throughout the hemisphere."

"The draft declaration hardly pays lip service to . . . worker rights, adjustment policies for those hit hard by trade, or a just share in economic expansion. Equally important, the proposed plan creates no structure or mechanism to advance worker rights and labor standards," they said.

While efforts by workers to raise these concerns have been rebuffed, "virtually every item on the corporate wish list is directly and favorably addressed," the labor officials complained.

They proposed establishing a hemisphere-wide consultation process, with trade unions participating, to lay the foundation for creation of a working group on worker rights at a follow-up March 1996 trade ministerial meeting.

"Workers throughout the hemisphere are united," they said. "Trade simply has no purpose if it does not benefit all our people."

Summit sponsors placed full-page newspaper ads in Denver in both English and Spanish demanding that worker rights be placed high on the trade ministers' agenda.

At least one of the 34 countries sending trade ministers to Denver, Colombia, indicated that it thought inclusion of worker rights in future trade agreements was a good idea.

Summit participants warmly greeted U.S. Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich, who reminded listeners that the purpose of trade agreements is to "lift living standards."

"Unless all are helped by international trade and economic growth, there is no purpose for economic integration," he said.

"There is no other reason to bring a hemispheric free trade agreement together if it doesn't grow jobs, if we don't raise standards of living," agreed U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor.

Fresh from achieving concessions from Japan on autos and auto parts, Kantor predicted that more and better jobs will result. To make his point, he held up an alternator now priced out of the Japanese market.

Donahue gave Kantor "high marks for carrying the flag," noting that his predecessors "have been working on that issue for 15 years, and have been walking away from trade tiffs with Japan with far less."

The labor summit was sponsored by ORIT, the AFL-CIO and the American Institute for Free Labor Development.

Rulings spur labor to renew civil rights efforts

By James B. Parks

The Supreme Court continued listing rightward in a series of rulings undermining affirmative action and the Voting Rights Act, but organized labor pledged to renew its efforts for civil rights for all.

"Although we have made progress toward the elimination of discrimination and exclusion in the workplace, it still is a fact of life in America that discrimination persists," said Richard Womack, AFL-CIO civil rights director.

"Much remains to be done to achieve genuine equality of opportunity. The Supreme Court's decisions should not be allowed to frustrate urgently needed civil rights programs," he said. "This court twists constitutional protections into weapons that strike at the heart of measures to guarantee individual rights."

The court rulings both came by 5-4 votes. In Adarand Construction vs. Pena, the slim majority held that federal affirmative action programs are subject to the same "strict scrutiny" that is applied to state and local programs. The ruling effectively makes it more difficult and expensive to implement affirmative action plans.

The 5-4 ruling in Miller vs. Johnson dealt a blow to congressional districts created to ensure that blacks gain representation in Washington. The decision makes illegal any congressional district designed solely on the basis of the race of the majority of its voters.

The immediate impact of the ruling is the invalidation of the Atlanta-area district represented by Cynthia McKinney (D), one of the labor movement's staunchest allies, and other districts are threatened.

"This decision takes us back 30 years. It's another example of workers being silenced," said UNITE Executive Vice President Bruce S. Raynor. One of the union's "first and most important battles" will be to re-elect McKinney and other officials whose districts may be in jeopardy because of the ruling, Raynor said. More than 3,000 textile and apparel workers live in McKinney's district.

Electronic Workers President William H. Bywater condemned the court that "voted to protect the rights of the spotted owl in the forest but voted against the rights of minorities to be represented in Congress. Minority rights in this country are still fragile and need the special protection of the law and the courts."

As President Clinton prepared to announce the results of an administration review of affirmative action rules, the AFL-CIO pointed out that the federation's "support of effective affirmative action — particularly in the employment context — is long-standing and unequivocal."

Clinton should make "the strongest endorsement of affirmative action as a lawful, proved and effective means of furthering equal opportunity in this country," said AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland in a letter to Clinton.

"The hard reality is that a long history of discrimination cannot be made to disappear in a few short years," Kirkland said.

"And, the equally hard reality is that for the foreseeable future, affirmative action programs are essential to correcting the past and improving the future."

In a speech to the annual conference of the A. Philip Randolph Institute, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue said that misinformation is feeding the opposition to affirmative action.

"Working families in this country are understandably nervous — and they are angry," he said. "Who isn't? They are working harder and harder for less. It is all too easy in times like these for demagogues on the right to persuade white families that the reason they are struggling is because affirmative action is giving black families an unfair share of the pie."

"We have got to make the case against this nonsense," Donahue said. "White families are struggling for the same reason that black families and Hispanic families and Asian families are struggling: because this nation tolerates the most unfair, unequal distribution of income of any industrialized nation.

"The villain is not affirmative action. It is a set of governmental policies that allows our workers to be exploited, that allows our best jobs to be shipped overseas, and that denies working men and women the right to organize a union and negotiate for decent wages and working conditions."

Labor must first educate its members about affirmative action, said Wyatt Closs, civil and human rights director for the Service Employees. He condemned the opponents of affirmative action for using the "politics of division and hate" to divide workers, students and businesses. He called on all organizations committed to social justice in the workplace to band together to save affirmative action.

COURTS

Carpenters blast ruling

Saying it will worsen the situation for timber workers, the Carpenters assailed the Supreme Court ruling upholding federal regulations protecting the habitat of endangered species.

"Today the Supreme Court has successfully added tens of thousands of working men and women to the list of endangered species," said Michael V. Draper, a member of the Carpenters' executive board. "The ruling is a defeat for all of us who support a balanced approach to protecting endangered species. We are gravely disappointed the court ignored the need to consider the human and economic aspects of species protection."

The 6-3 decision in Babbitt vs. Sweet Home Chamber of Commerce upheld the Interior Department's regulation that prohibits changes in the habitat that injure a threatened or endangered species. It rejected claims that the Endangered Species Act prohibited only direct harm to protected species.

Draper called on Congress to amend the ESA to require evaluations for listing an endangered species that "includes sufficient consideration for the economic and jobs impact of species protection."

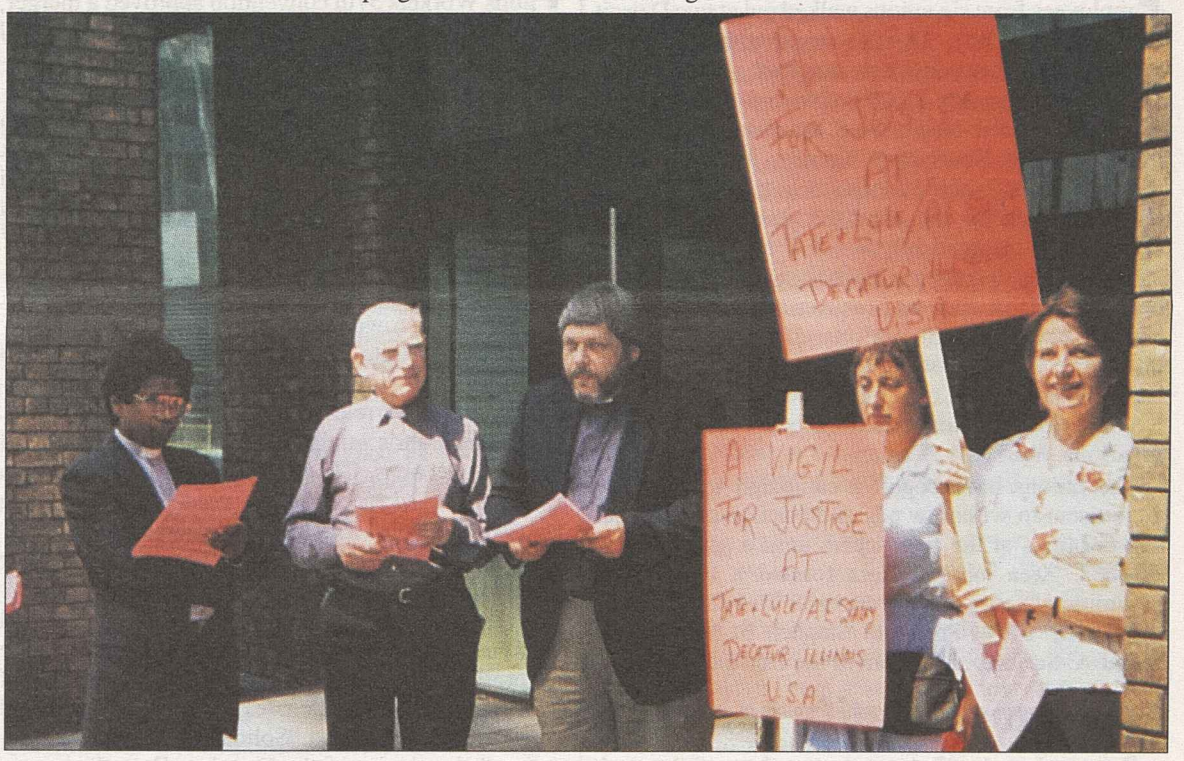
Professors sue for pact

Claiming a "power grab" by the Republican-controlled legislature, a group of 162 college professors in downstate Illinois filed suit to overturn an education bill that folded their college into the University of Illinois system.

As a condition of accepting Sangamon State University, UI President Stan Ikenberry insisted that the school's union contract be abrogated. The legislature agreed.

The bill also enlarged the bargaining unit for professors to the entire UI system rather than the individual campuses. Before the move, AFT Local 4100 represented professors at seven of the 12 state campuses. Another group of professors at a Chicago campus also filed suit claiming the bargaining unit was enlarged just as their organizing drive was succeeding.

Now the union must try to win future representation elections in the entire system, said Local 4100 President Mitch Vogel. It faces an uphill battle since the new unit also includes 4,500 more people — including highly paid medical school doctors "who teach once a week," Vogel said.



The Rev. Michael Szpak of the AFL-CIO (center) leads London protesters in prayer for Staley workers.

Community rallies behind workers

Continued from Page 1

it and stick to it," said the local union president.

Persons interested in donating funds to help the workers and their families should contact the Local 7837 Food and Assistance Fund, 2882 North Dinneen, Decatur, Ill. 62526.

The corporate campaign is focusing on Pepsi because that company buys 30 percent of Staley's corn sweetner. The campaign will include Pepsico subsidiaries KFC, Pizza Hut and Taco Bell, said Doug Brooks, UPIU's special projects director.

"We have some 200 support groups organized by the local, the international and the AFL-CIO, and we intend to send a message to Pepsi to do the right thing and dump Staley — don't use that scab-made product so long as Staley continues to attack workers," Watts said.

The union is urging supporters to call Pepsi CEO Wayne Callaway at 1-800-433-2652 to urge the company to stop buying Staley products.

Community and religious supporters around the world also stepped up their efforts to help the workers.

A delegation of religious leaders stood in front of the London headquarters of Staley parent Tate and Lyle on the second anniversary of the lockout, holding placards with the names of the locked-out workers.

"Our faith calls us to be a witness to the suffering that the Staley workers, their families and the local community in Decatur have endured during these past two years of the lockout," said Sister Marie Power, of the Conference of Religious of England and Wales.

Religious leaders conducted a vigil the same day in front of the Canadian Imperial Bank in Toronto, where Tate and Lyle CEO Sir Neil Shaw is a director.

Several days before that vigil, religious leaders held a three-day "Fast for Justice" in Decatur to highlight the need to heal the wounds caused by the lockout and to urge Staley to negotiate fairly. In London, on June 22, the last day of the fast, another group of church officials held a vigil in front of Tate and Lyle, reading off the names of locked-out Staley workers and offering public prayers for them.

In the civil rights case, the Justice Department is reviewing allegations against Decatur police on behalf of more than a hundred Staley workers who were pepper-gassed. Four of the victims have filed a class-action lawsuit against the city and police officers who were allegedly involved in the incident.

"We're suing so that Decatur police will understand that this abuse of their authority in support of all the harm Staley has done to our families and to our community was just plain wrong," said Dennis Lamb, a locked-out worker and one of the plaintiffs.

In the escalating price-fixing probe, Staley records were subpoenaed by federal investigators who also are looking at agribusiness giant Archer Daniels Midland. Local 7837 said ADM provides products for Staley customers, aiding the company's campaign against the workers.

UNION NEWS

Bridgestone top priority for merged Steelworkers

By James B. Parks

It's official: The Rubber Workers are now Steelworkers after a URW special convention approved a merger with the USWA.

"Today is a turning point for the labor movement," said USWA President George Becker and URW President Kenneth L. Coss, who becomes a USWA board member under the merger agreement. "The long parallel histories of two great unions have been joined in the convention action creating what we believe is the premier labor organization in the world and a major force that empowers workers."

The merger raises USWA membership by 94,000 to more than 700,000. Within the merged union, the 60-year-old URW becomes the Rubber/Plastic Industry Conference of the USWA, based in URW headquarters in Akron.

Coss becomes the conference executive vice president and former URW Vice President J. Michael Stanley becomes an administrative vice president. The former URW board members become a conference executive advisory committee. Former URW Secretary-Treasurer Glenn Ellison is now executive assistant to USWA Secretary-Treasurer Leo W. Gerard.

The 617-304 vote came after speakers pointed to the strength that the merger would bring to the URW in its dispute against Bridgestone/Firestone. The URW suspended its strike against the giant Japanese tire manufacturer May 22 in a new effort for a contract.

Some 4,200 URW members in five states walked out July 12, 1994, almost three months after their contract had expired. The strike was the longest in tire industry history. Many of the workers have not returned to work because of replacements hired during the strike.

Besides the benefits of the USWA legal, organizing and educational service, the former URW members are covered by the $166 million USWA strike fund.

Ray Wiseman, president of former URW Local 714, told the delegates that unions need strength in numbers to fight multinational corporations, and that USWA's "tools and war chest" will help rubber workers fight back "after the last few years of hell."

Becker promised he would be a "junkyard dog" on behalf of the rubber workers, calling the Bridgestone dispute USWA's first priority. The merger will result in "a hell of a lot of trouble for Bridgestone/Firestone," he said.

The Clinton administration continued its fight against the company's hiring of scabs. Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich informed Bridgestone/Firestone that it is one of the companies that could stand to lose millions in federal contracts under President Clinton's recent executive order banning deals with companies that use permanent replacements for strikers.

Under the order, which went into effect June 26, federal contractors who hire permanent replacements could have their contracts terminated and be barred from future contracts or contract renewals until the labor dispute is resolved and the jobs of striking workers restored.

Bridgestone/Firestone joined the Chamber of Commerce, National Association of Manufacturers and others in filing a suit to halt enforcement of the order, and congressional Republicans have mounted a drive to repeal it.

BARGAINING

Workers strike newspaper

Employees from six unions walked out at two Detroit newspapers July 13 after negotiations failed to produce agreement on a new contract.

Contracts covering 2,600 employees expired April 30 at the Detroit News, Free Press and the jointly owned Detroit Newspaper Agency, which operates the two papers' non-editorial activities. The DNA refused to extend the contracts past July 2, even though talks resumed July 9.

The company is demanding drastic job cuts, givebacks on health care and restrictions on the grievance procedure. The unions, working together under the Council of Newspaper Unions, include Newspaper Guild Local 22, two Teamsters locals, two Graphics Communications locals and Communications Workers.

The unions have begun a campaign to convince advertisers to withdraw ads and customers to cancel subscriptions at the two papers until a settlement is reached. Area labor leaders formed a blue-ribbon committee to support the workers. The committee is headed by UAW President Stephen P. Yokich and Edgar A. Scribner, president of the Detroit AFL-CIO.

Performers ratify contract

Raises of up to 32 percent over three years mark the latest contract ratified by the Screen Actors Guild and Television and Radio Artists.

More than 96 percent of members voting approved the pact, which covers 114,000 television and film performers. Effective July 1, the minimum daily rate for principal performers jumped from $504 to $522, with the weekly scale going from $1,752 to $1,813.

Other features of the pact include:

- A deal with the Fox network that bases performers' residuals for prime-time reruns on actual, rather than minimum, compensation — which might mean 50 percent higher residuals in some cases.
- SAG's West Coast extra performers will see wage increases of 32 percent over the life of the contract.
- AFTRA's extras will see a 15 percent hike over the duration of the contract.
- Increased employer contributions to SAG's pension plan and improved language protecting residuals in bankruptcy cases. AFTRA negotiates health and retirement benefits separately.

Hotel pact covers 18,000

A six-year contract covering 18,000 workers at 79 New York City hotels was ratified by the New York City Hotel and Motel Trades Council July 5, averting a threatened strike.

The contract, said council President Vito Pitta, "will lead to harmony with the hotels and job security."

The contract includes an immediate 4 percent raise, increases in tips, premium pay for work beyond five consecutive days and a five-day notice period for layoffs and schedule changes.

CWA prepares for political battles

Anaheim, Calif.

The more than 2,300 delegates to the Communications Workers 57th convention approved a merger, endorsed candidates to lead the AFL-CIO and heard some good news about Sprint, whose labor law violations have vexed the union for years.

CWA President Morton Bahr told the convention CWA members and all union members must work vigorously for the re-election of President Clinton and the defeat of the GOP in 1996 to quell "the most serious attack" on organized labor since the 1947 Taft-Hartley Act.

"Can you imagine the kind of legislation that will surface if the crowd that controls the Congress today also has the White House?" Bahr asked. "They and their friends in corporate America will seek to legislate unions into irrelevancy."

Echoing Bahr's sentiments about the importance of the 1996 elections, CWA Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling urged members to spread the word, noting that "we must start with our own members."

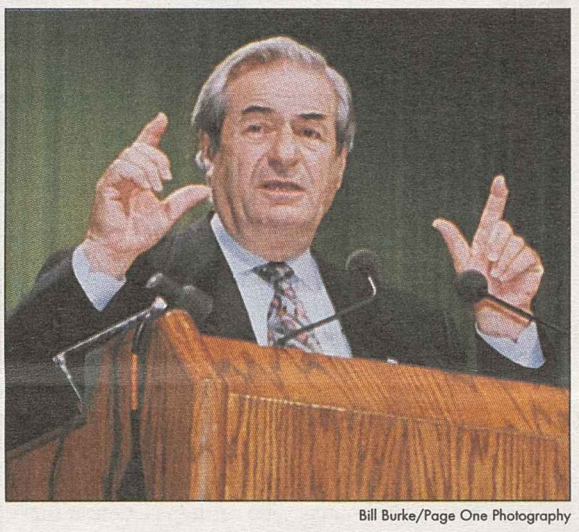
"Forty percent of them voted Republican in the last election," she said.

With cheers and whistles, the convention voted unanimously to endorse the ticket of Tom Donahue for president and Easterling for secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO. The delegates also waved blue and green placards that read "Solidarity, Diversity, Innovation," the slogan of the Donahue-Easterling campaign.

The convention also heard from Donahue, the AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer who is running to succeed Lane Kirkland as president. He and Easterling are opposed by Service Employees President John J. Sweeney for president and Mine Workers President Richard L. Trumka for secretary-treasurer.

Delegates unanimously approved the merger of the Newspaper Guild with the CWA, which TNG President Charles Dale said almost certainly would be approved by a TNG member referendum in October.

And the delegates also cheered loudly as Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich announced he would meet personally with Mexican labor officials regarding allegations that labor laws were violated when Sprint Corp. closed a San Francisco office to thwart a union drive. Sprint fired 235 Spanish-speaking workers at La Conexion Familiar, the company's California telemarketing company, one week before they were to vote for union representation.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

CWA President Morton Bahr addresses convention.

"I've decided to meet with the Mexican labor officials pursuant to the NAO (North American Free Trade Agreement's National Administrative Office) process," he said.

The Mexican National Administrative Office issued a report last month that said U.S. labor laws protecting workers' rights to organize probably were violated by the firings. The report asked the U.S. government to review the case.

The delegates also passed resolutions in support of affirmative action, political mobilization and a national economic policy based on justice for working families.

Other speakers included Rep. Tom Lantos (D-Calif.), Farm Workers President Arturo Rodriguez and John F. Henning, executive secretary-treasurer of the California AFL-CIO.

CWA, IBEW warn of Baby Bell strikes

The Communications Workers and Electrical Workers have moved closer to striking two regional Bell operating companies.

Ameritech Corp., which operates in the Midwest, is negotiating separate contracts with the two unions. CWA also is bargaining with Bell Atlantic for a contract for its 39,000 workers in Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware and the District of Columbia.

At Ameritech, an IBEW council recommended June 28 that its 11,500 members reject the company's contract proposal. The original contract expired June 24, but both sides agreed to an extension until Aug. 9 so that a membership vote could be taken.

Union leaders said they opposed Ameritech's offer because it sought a two-tier wage system and reductions in retirement and health care benefits.

CWA's contract with Ameritech, covering nearly 30,000 employees, expires Aug. 5. CWA pledged its support to IBEW after the union council's action was announced, clearing the way for both unions to go out on strike the first week of August if agreements are not reached.

Meanwhile, CWA members at Bell Atlantic by an 8-1 margin authorized a strike if a new contract agreement isn't reached by the same Aug. 5 deadline. "It's clear that CWA members understand the need to arm their bargaining committee with every tool possible to win a good contrct this year," said CWA Vice President Peter G. Catucci.

UNION NEWS

Musicians elect Young

The Musicians welcomed a new president and renewed their emphasis on organizing during the union's 91st convention in Las Vegas.

Steve Young moves up from vice president to president, taking over for Mark Tully Massagli, who retires July 31. Secretary-Treasurer Stephen R. Sprague won re-election and Tom Lee was elected vice president. Canadian Vice President Ray Petch also was re-elected.

The more than 400 delegates passed several resolutions to help facilitate organizing at the local and national level, including establishment of an organizing and education department.

Joel Flatow of the Recording Industry Association spoke on the joint efforts of RIAA and AFM to lobby Congress for passage of S. 227, the performance rights bill, which would protect performers after digital recordings are made and disseminated.

Other speakers included Claude "Blackie" Evans, executive secretary-treasurer of the Nevada AFL-CIO.

Pony violated law

The Labor Department has determined that Pony Express violated the federal Service Contract Act by not paying legally required wages to Charlotte, N.C., drivers who pick up and deliver checks for the Federal Reserve Bank.

The Fed was ordered to withhold its monthly payment of $45,889 to the company until $262,000 is collected for back pay.

Under the Service Contract Act, the drivers should be paid $8 an hour and have two weeks vacation after one year of service and 10 paid holidays. Instead, payroll records show most drivers in the Charlotte area receive just $4.50 an hour, with wages ranging from $4.35 to $9.75 per hour.

Pony Express drivers across the country voted for representation by the Teamsters two years ago, but the company has refused to bargain with the union.

Unions help dislocated

Three labor organizations and St. Mary's Health Clinics have begun a joint program aimed at providing free health care to dislocated workers and their families in St. Paul, Minn.

The program includes the UAW, Teamsters and the St. Paul Trades and Labor Assembly. The workers have access to 11 clinics that are open at least one half-day each week.

The program is funded by the Allina Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Allina Health System, one of the state's largest integrated service networks.

Local AFL-CIOs merge

The Camden/Gloucester and Cumberland/Salem AFL-CIOs have merged to form the Southern New Jersey AFL-CIO in an effort to provide a greater voice for workers.

William F. Youse, president of the new local AFL-CIO, explained that the merger "is an opportunity to create a political climate in which legislation detrimental to the interests of workers will be met with political activism."

The merger involves 120 local unions with a combined membership of 60,000.

IBT votes benefit cuts

The Teamsters executive board approved cuts in the retirement and family protection plan for the union's top officers and staff.

The changes include no pension credits for salaries above $100,000, new calculations for employees who opt to take a lump sum at retirement instead of monthly benefits and new rules of reciprocity for employees.

The changes, which are subject to negotiation with the Office and Professional Employees, are expected to save the union hundreds of thousands of dollars.



AFA photo

United Airlines Chairman Gerald Greenwald stepped away from his ceremonial duties at the inauguration of the new Boeing 777 at Washington-Dulles International Airport to meet with picketing Flight Attendants. The AFA members, who also demonstrated at the San Francisco airport, were protesting United's plan for a fourth foreign flight attendant domicile in Hong Kong, which opened July 1.

NEWSMAKERS

Actor/singer **Theodore Bikel** was re-elected to a fourth two-year term as president of the Actors and Artistes. Other office holders re-elected by acclamation include **Bruce York**, first vice president; **Patrick Quinn**, second vice-president; **Carl Harms**, third vice-president; **Rod McKuen**, fourth vice president; **Seymour Rexite**, fifth vice president; **Thomas Jamerson**, treasurer; and **John Sucke**, executive secretary.

Three union presidents have been appointed to the board of directors of the Union Labor Life Insurance Co. Presidents **Frank W. Carter** of the Glass, Molders and Plastic Workers, **Frank Hurt** of the Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers and **Vincent Sombrotto** of the Letter Carriers will serve three-year terms.

Michael Silverstein has resigned as a top policy director with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Silverstein had expressed his frustration with Congress's efforts to undermine the agency, the same sentiment expressed last month by his wife, **Barbara**, who resigned from her post overseeing the agency's efforts for an ergonomics standard.

Edwin M. Schmidt, director of the AFL-CIO's reproduction and mailings division, was selected to serve on the National Postal Museum's Advisory Commission. The commission meets annually to assist in planning the museum programs and operations.

AWARDS

LeRoy Trotman, president of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and the Barbados Workers' Union, received the 1995 A. Philip Randolph Institute's Randolph/Rustin Freedom Award at the group's annual conference. **Georges Exceus**, director of the Port-au-Prince office of the American Institute for Free Labor Development, received the Bayard Rustin Humanitarian Award and **Ray Francis**, director of AFL-CIO Region XII, received the A. Philip Randolph Achievement Award.

The Northeastern Oklahoma Central Labor Council presented the 1995 Eagle Awards to the **Rev. Donald Brooks** and Oklahoma State Sen. **Lewis Long Jr.** The award is presented for outstanding efforts to promote labor. Brooks is a founding member of the Northeast Oklahoma Labor-Religion Council of Oklahoma. Long is a member of Pipeliners Local 798 and has consistently stood behind and carried labor bills in the state Senate.

More than $150,000 in Union MasterCard scholarships were awarded to 114 students. Nine students were honored with the program's top $4,000 award, 15 students received awards ranging from $2,000 to $3,000, 55 students received $1,000 to $1,500 awards and 35 students were awarded scholarships ranging from $500 to $750. The applicants were evaluated according to academic ability, social awareness, financial need and appreciation of labor.

RESOURCES

WETA-TV, a Washington, D.C., public broadcasting station, is producing a 90-minute television documentary on the life of **A. Philip Randolph** and is looking for visuals, memorabilia and artifacts relating to Randolph's life and career. The producer also would like to interview people about their experiences with Randolph. Contact Averi Livingston, WETA-TV coordinating producer, P.O. Box 2626, Washington, D.C. 20013; or call collect at 800/998-2705.

PUBLICATIONS

The following issue papers are available from the AFL-CIO Department of Economic Research, 815 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006: **Soaring Profits Not Shared With Workers,** which deals with the record profits of companies, high productivity, low wage gains and high executive compensation; and **Trashing the CPI**, which explains the importance of the consumer price index and its reliability.

Look for the Union Label is a 354-page history of the Ladies' Garment Workers, emphasizing the union's spirit of social reform. Copies are $55 for hardcover and $21.95 for paperback. Contact M.E. Sharpe News, Inc. at 800/541-6563.

The AFL-CIO Community Services Program and the United Way of America have produced **Youth Yellow Pages** for many states. The pages include emergency numbers and numbers for alcohol and drug rehabilitation, counseling, peer pressure, pregnancy and runaways. For more information, contact Alan Bosch, Community Services Department, 202/637-5193.

The 1995 **AFL-CIO Leadership Manual — Current Issues** offers union members information and skills to lead political and legislative action effectively. It highlight the federation's Stand UP campaign and outlines key legislative issues. The manual also includes an instructor's manual. Each manual costs $3. Contact the AFL-CIO Education Department, 815 16th St. N.W., Room 407, Washington, D.C. 20006.

Construction Organizing: An Organizing and Contract Enforcement Guide is a 240-page handbook on enforcing contracts, government regulation of the industry and case studies. The cost of up to four copies is $15 each and for 5 or more copies, $12 each. Checks should be made payable to the George Meany Center for Labor Studies. Contact the Labor's Heritage Press Department, George Meany Center for Labor Studies, 10000 New Hampshire Ave., Silver Spring, Md. 20903.

CONVENTIONS

The 8th Biennial Convention of the **Coalition of Labor Union Women** will be held Oct. 12-15 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Dearborn, Mich. The registration fee is $50. Contact CLUW, 1126 16th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036; or call 202/296-1200.

Foreign-crewed U.S. ships blasted

Taxpayers subsidizing runaways, unionists say

By David Kameras

With a cry of "American ships, American jobs," 2,000 maritime workers and their supporters rallied June 29 at the Port of Oakland, Calif., to denounce the first entry into U.S. waters of an American-owned container ship manned by a foreign crew.

Protesting this new blow to the already ailing U.S.-flag merchant marine, demonstrators from some 200 local unions circled the terminal gates of American President Lines, the nation's second-largest liner operator, temporarily blocking trucks from entering or leaving the area.

Workers represented by the Longshoremen and Warehousemen Local 10 didn't work the evening shift. Earlier, two boatloads of protesters waved signs alongside the vessel as it pulled into port.

"The AFL-CIO has never stood for, and will never stand for, the manning of American-owned vessels by foreign mariners just so big corporations can profit from the weakening of the merchant marine," Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue said in a message to the demonstrators. "Just as the merchant marine has fought for America, our country needs to fight for you."

The APL China, one of six new vessels built overseas for APL, has been registered in the Marshall Islands, a "flag of convenience" that permits its owner to circumvent U.S. maritime law by crewing with foreign nationals.

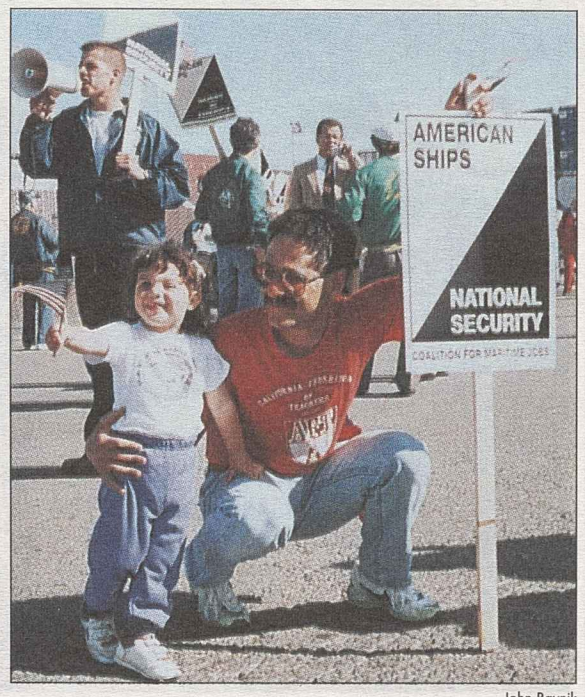
"APL has indicated to us that they're not interested in the American flag anymore," said Gunnar Lundeberg, president and secretary-treasurer of the Sailors Union of the Pacific, an affiliate of the Seafarers. His union has described the new vessels as belonging to the "Benedict Arnold" class of containerships.

APL claims that congressional inaction towards creating a new ship subsidy program has forced them to flag foreign and hire cheap, a position disputed by labor.

The Coalition for Maritime Jobs, the group of Bay Area seagoing unions that sponsored the demonstration, blasted APL for accepting billions of dollars in subsidies from U.S. taxpayers, then joining the ranks of corporate runaways, "putting profits before national security and before the well-being of American families. The company is to a large degree a creature of federal subsidy programs and other forms of federal support."

"APL has at every point frustrated efforts by U.S. officers and seamen to provide relief on the issue of competitive labor costs," the coalition stated. "The company made it clear that it did not want American seamen on its new vessels under any circumstances."

Several unions filed suit to reverse a decision by the Maritime Administration allowing APL to register its ships abroad. However, a federal judge turned down the request on the same day of the protest. The unions plan to appeal the decision.



John Ravnik

Fred Glass, research director of the California AFT, and daughter Alexandra protest APL's foreign-flag action, as Daniel O'Brien of the SUP addresses demonstrators.

Apart from three German officers and one British engineer, the APL China's 23-member crew hails from the Philippines, a major source of cheap labor for operators who until now have benefited from U.S. subsidies in return for keeping ships and seagoing jobs here at home.

Under rights guaranteed by their collective bargaining agreement, union members boarded the ship to inspect the vessel and talk to the crew. However, the seamen had been instructed by management to avoid contact with American unions or risk termination, according to the SUP.

Among the speakers at the rally were John Henning, executive secretary-treasurer of the California AFL-CIO; Judy Gott, president, and Owen Marron, secretary-treasurer, of the Alameda County AFL-CIO; Walter Johnson, secretary-treasurer of the San Francisco AFL-CIO; Chuck Mack, president of the Joint Council of Teamsters 7; and "Whitey" Disley, president of the SIU-affiliated Marine Firemen's Union.

A similar demonstration took place July 2 when the ship arrived in Long Beach, Calif.

In addition to APL, two other large American liner operators, Sea-Land Service Inc. and Lykes Bros. Steamship Co., are planning to place some of their ships under foreign registries.

AFGE protests plan to cut 79 bases

The Government Employees are objecting to a proposal to cut 79 military bases around the country.

The recommendations of the Base Closure and Realignment Commission "would cut deeply into our nation's defense posture and its supporting defense industrial base; siphon off modernization and readiness funds to support unplanned base closures; and critically disrupt the maintenance flow supporting military operations," said AFGE President John Sturdivant.

In a July 6 letter to President Clinton, Sturdivant questioned the reasoning behind many of the commission's recommendations. For example, two large complexes slated for closure, Kelly Air Force Base in San Antonio, and McClellan Air Force Base in Sacramento, Calif., were ranked by the Air Force as "must haves" because of their core workload and their importance in servicing key Air Force weapons systems.

Clinton objected to the recommendations, calling them "an outrage," even as he grudgingly accepted the package and passed it on to Congress, which can either reject the recommendations or accept them in full.

The administration has come up with a plan that would retain up to 1,000 jobs at McClellan for five years by shifting work to private contractors. But workers quoted by the L.A. Times were skeptical.

"You lose all those benefits and start at the bottom," said Rich Smith, an aircraft field systems specialist. "Besides, they say the jobs will stay in California, but will they stay at McClellan? California's a big state."

"It's a cop-out," added Bill Anderson, an electrical repair person at the base. "If you're civil service, and most of us here are, you don't draw unemployment when you get laid off like people in the private sector do."

The local community isn't impressed either. "It's about as useful to us as a screen door on a submarine," said an aide to Sacramento Mayor Joe Serna Jr.

Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) said closing McClellan would cost more than $500 million plus environmental clean-up expenses. The base is home to an air logistics center whose closing would cost $800 million, more than the Air Force has budgeted for all base closures and realignments over six years.

Meanwhile, the Labor Department is awarding a $17 million defense conversion assistance grant for 2,700 workers displaced by the impending closure of the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard.

To date, a total of $28.2 million has been allocated for 4,750 workers at the shipyard.

Meyer Werft, a shipbuilding firm, is negotiating to set up a construction and repair facility at the yard that together with another interested employer could provide roughly 2,750 jobs.

"This is a superb shipbuilder," said John Meese, president of the AFL-CIO Metal Trades Department, who has signed a memorandum of understanding with the German firm seeking a labor-management partnership in establishing working conditions, retraining and financing.

— David Kameras

CONVENTION CALENDAR

This is a list of conventions and conferences scheduled for 1995 by the AFL-CIO and international affiliates, state central bodies and fraternal organizations.

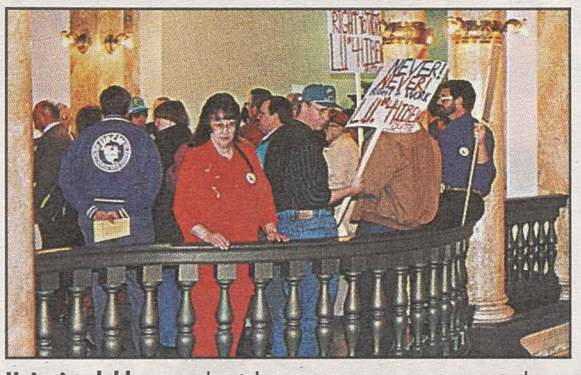
DATE	ORGANIZATION	PLACE
July 17-21	UTU	Chicago
July 17-21	IATSE	Miami Beach
July 22-23	Police Associations	Alexandria, Va.
Aug. 3-5	Virginia	Richmond
Aug. 8-11	TCU	Miami Beach
Aug. 16-18	Iowa	Waterloo
Aug. 18-19	New Mexico	Angel Fire
Aug. 27-31	Fire Fighters	San Francisco
Sept. 6-8	South Carolina	Myrtle Beach
Sept. 6-8	Nevada	Las Vegas
Sept. 11-13	Minnesota	Bloomington
Sept. 11-15	Florida	Miami Beach
Sept. 15-17	Vermont	Rutland
Sept. 18-20	Maryland State & DC	Washington
Sept. 18-20	Oregon	Portland
Sept. 17-22	ATU	Las Vegas
Sept. 20-22	Connecticut	Hartford
Sept. 20-22	Colorado	Crested Butte
Sept. 21-23	Washington	Tacoma
Sept. 21-23	North Dakota	Bismarck
Sept. 22-28	Machinists	Chicago
Sept. 24-29	Mine Workers	Miami Beach
Sept. 25-27	Nebraska	North Platte
Sept. 25-29	Carpenters	Las Vegas
Sept. 27-29	North Carolina	Asheville
Sept. 28-30	Montana	Billings
Oct. 2-5	Bricklayers	Chicago
Oct. 3-6	Massachusetts	Boston
Oct. 4-6	Kansas	Topeka
Oct. 4-6	West Virginia	Charleston
Oct. 5-6	Rhode Island	Providence
Oct. 13-14	Hawaii	Honolulu
Oct. 16-18	Alabama	Birmingham
Oct. 23-25	Train Dispatchers	Las Vegas
Oct. 28-29	New Hampshire	North Conway
Oct. 31-Nov. 3	Indiana	Indianapolis
Nov. 1-3	Maine	Rockport
Nov. 13-15	Tennessee	Nashville
AFL-CIO Meetings		
July 31	IUD Executive Council	Chicago
Aug. 1-2	AFL-CIO Executive Council Meeting	Chicago
Aug. 4-6	APALA	New York
Aug. 28-30	BCTD	Chicago
Sept. 7-8	PED Convention	Lake Buena Vista
Sept. 9-10	JLC Biennial Convention	New York
Sept. 27-28	TTD Convention	Washington
Oct. 12-15	CLUW Convention	Colorado
Oct. 19-20	Maritime Trades	New York
Oct. 19-21	ILCA Convention	New York
Oct. 20	DPE Convention	New York
Oct. 21-22	IUE Executive Board	New York
Oct. 23-26	AFL-CIO Convention	New York
Nov. 26-30	Southern Labor School	Jeckyll Island
Dec 17-19	HRDI Conference	Orlando

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Unionists lobby state legislatures to stop war on workers. **Special section, Pages 7-10.**

AFL-CIO NEWS

VOLUME 40, NUMBER 16 JULY 31, 1995

Stand UP expands again for August recess

By Mike Hall

Buoyed by two victories but still facing major legislative challenges, the AFL-CIO will expand its Stand UP campaign to more than 30 congressional districts for lobbying during the lengthy August recess.

The recess campaign will focus on the ongoing assault on worker protections, from the proposed gutting of the nation's job safety laws and the National Labor Relations Board to the elimination of job training programs.

Tailored radio and television ads are being developed and full-time coordinators from the AFL-CIO and affiliated unions have been assigned to each district.

Workers will be encouraged to attend rallies to highlight the rising stakes in the Republicans' attack on workers, such as the recent demonstration by 500 union members in front of House Budget Committee Chairman John Kasich's Columbus, Ohio, office, led by Service Employees President John J. Sweeney and AFSCME Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson.

More than 10,000 union members and their allies are expected for an Aug. 13 Solidarity rally in Tacoma, Wash. Working men and women will take to the streets on Labor Day to celebrate labor solidarity and to make clear their determination to keep their rights and to Stand UP for a decent standard of living and good jobs.

Besides rallies, unions all over the country will make a full-court press on behalf of workers, holding legislative action committee meetings, including several with GOP House members, and distributing individualized fliers at plant gates and job sites in the

Continued on Page 3

Stand UP For America's Working Families

THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE AFL-CIO LEADING THE FIGHT FOR AMERICA'S WORKING FAMILIES

- Defending OSHA, MSHA
- A win on labor law
- Gutting job training
- Pension investment hit

See stories, Pages 3-4



Raymond Crowell/ Page One Photography

Announcing the plan to unify their unions by the year 2000 are, from left: Presidents Stephen Yokich of the UAW, George Becker of the Steelworkers and George Kourpias of the Machinists.

Powerful new union emerges

By James B. Parks

Saying they are creating a "new union for a new era," the UAW, Steelworkers and Machinists announced plans to unite their three unions by the year 2000, creating the largest AFL-CIO affiliate.

The new union would have nearly 2 million active and 1.4 million retired members. It would represent workers in the automobile, aerospace, metals, transportation, chemicals, mining, utilities, electronics and consumer goods industries. All three unions have growing memberships in the health care, public employee, office, professional and technical sectors.

"It's wrong and it's dangerous when so many men and women are working more productively than ever and getting less to show for their contribution," UAW President Stephen P. Yokich said at a joint Washington news conference July 27. "Strong unions are the best way to reverse that trend.

"Uniting these three great organizations will create the high-performance union that can serve our members and carry out the mission of fighting for economic and social justice," he said.

USWA President George Becker, who said he was so excited, "it almost brings tears to my eyes," stressed that the combined political, economic and organizing power of the three unions will allow them to stop reacting to anti-worker agendas and "give us new opportunities to change course and set the agenda to benefit our collective memberships and give voice to the disenfranchised."

The unification should send a message to employers and governments that "workers are going to have the numbers to fight back," IAM President George Kourpias said. The unification brings together "the most progressive and militant labor organizations in the United States and Canada. It won't be an easy road, but it is the right thing to do."

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland and Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue said the proposed unification "sends a powerful message."

"This action will increase their strength, assuring the best representation of the interests of working families at a time of rapid change and dangerous

Continued on page 13

Aug. 1 to mark end of historic Kirkland era

By Rex Hardesty

The first day of the mid-summer AFL-CIO Executive Council meeting, Aug. 1, marks the historic day President Lane Kirkland will step down after 16 years and the council will elect a successor.

Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue announced June 12 he would be a candidate for the presidency. Service Employees President John J. Sweeney has said he will oppose Donahue at the Oct. 23-26 AFL-CIO convention in New York, whether or not he contests Donahue for the remainder of Kirkland's term in the council election.

Sweeney's campaign committee, in announcing an Aug. 1 news conference, said July 20 that "regardless of the outcome of the Executive Council's proceedings, the reality is that, come the end of October, there will be a New Voice speaking for labor from the offices of the AFL-CIO."

For Kirkland, Aug. 1 will mark 26 years as a federation officer, 47 years since he joined the AFL staff and 53 years in his union, the Masters, Mates and Pilots. He was elected secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO at the Executive Council meeting in May 1969 and took office as secretary-treasurer on July 1. He was unopposed at the 1979 convention to succeed George Meany as AFL-CIO president.

At that 1979 convention, Kirkland noted the delegates' injunction to seek reaffiliation of those unions — the UAW, Teamsters, Mine Workers and Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union — who had left the federation in previous decades. Kirkland made a first priority of his appeal to those unions that "neither pride nor pelf" should keep them away.

Ten years later, Kirkland had brought them all back, plus the Locomotive Engineers, who had never belonged to any federation, the United Transportation Union and the Writer's Guild East.

Almost immediately, Kirkland faced a harsh political environment in the election of Ronald Reagan and an employer community confident it could press that advantage. That continuing assault on organized labor is arguably the most severe since the 1920s, when the "American Plan" employer campaign cut the mem-

Continued on Page 12

World labor casts Olympic spotlight on outlaw Pony

International trade unionists served notice that anti-union companies should have no place in the 1996 Olympics, set for Atlanta.

Mine Workers President Richard L. Trumka led a group of union leaders who met with officials of the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG) to express their concern over the ongoing dispute at Pony Express. The courier company is a subsidiary of Borg-Warner Security Corp., one of the official sponsors of the 1996 games.

Some 4,000 Pony Express workers, including those in Atlanta, voted for representation by the Teamsters two years ago but still have no contract.

Trumka also delivered a letter from FIET, the International Federation of Commercial, Clerical, Professional and Technical Employees, asking that Borg-Warner's sponsorship of the games be reviewed because of "a number of expressions of concern from our affiliates in different countries."

Pony Express has been charged with more than 100 violations of the National Labor Relations Act, the letter said. FIET represents 47 million workers in more than 120 countries around the world.

FIET also passed a resolution during its recent convention in Vienna that condemned Pony Express's treatment of workers and questioned Borg-Warner's ability to provide the estimated $10 million in security services it is offering in exchange for sponsorship.

Although ACOG has not responded to labor's request, unionists indicated they intend to stay in the battle to the end, and will take whatever action is necessary, including calling on support from leaders of unions in other countries.

Trumka, Atlanta AFL-CIO President Stewart Acuff and dozens of trade unionists also leafletted a NationsBank branch office, one of Pony Express' customers. The IBT also is asking trade unionists to write ACOG in support of the Pony Express drivers.

This marks the second time organized labor has confronted ACOG. In 1993, ACOG agreed to hire union workers and pay prevailing wages on construction projects for the 1996 Olympics after several meetings with AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue, and a series of union rallies organized by Acuff.

Overnite in settlement on labor law violations

Overnite Transportation Co. has agreed to settle hundreds of charges of labor law violations during a Teamsters organizing drive, and will give pay raises and back pay to more than 400 workers.

More than 900 Overnite managers could be subject to contempt charges under the National Labor Relations Board settlement, which IBT President Ron Carey hailed as "a major victory for 1,500 Overnite workers that provides new protections and rights for workers who stood up to months of unlawful threats."

The settlement also permits the IBT and NLRB to continue seeking bargaining orders at 18 Overnite freight terminals. Bargaining orders would require Overnite to immediately recognize the union and negotiate a contract.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-Ohio) describes a garment held by Judith Yanira Viera from El Salvador, made in Central American sweatshops for U.S. companies. Viera, 18, and Claudia Leticia Molina, 17, seated next to her, appeared at a news conference with several House members, including Rep. William Clay (D-Mo.), left.

Latina teens air human cost of greed

By Muriel H. Cooper

Two Central American teenagers are touring the United States to recount the harrowing abuse they face daily from their U.S. employers in so-called "Free Trade Zones."

Judith Yanira Viera, an 18-year-old El Salvadoran, and 17-year-old Honduran Claudia Leticia Molina work in multinational manufacturing plants making shirts for such well-known labels as Eddie Bauer, J.C. Penney, the GAP and Dayton-Hudson for about $43 a week.

The shirts are then sold in U.S. stores for at least $20 each. The workers did not know how much their products were being sold for until they visited a U.S. GAP clothing store as part of their monthlong tour, which was sponsored by the New York-based National Labor Committee.

"We did not have any idea of how much the shirts cost," said Molina through a translator. "It's not fair because the companies are not concerned about how the clothes are made and our misery. We don't earn enough to buy food."

The women said the supervisors yell at the workers to make them work faster. They are timed for bathroom breaks and are victims of sexual harassment. Several women have suffered miscarriages due to unsafe working conditions and long work hours, they said.

Viera was among 350 workers fired after they tried to organize a union.

"We need your help," she said. "We want to have rights where we aren't abused any more, and aren't threatened with job loss for being in the union. We want to be able to work in the day so we can go to school at night. We want the bosses to stop treating pregnant women badly."

The American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD) and the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees are assisting the workers in their organizing efforts in El Salvador.

The plight of the two young women illustrates the need for worker rights to be linked to trade agreements. With multinational corporations searching the globe for the cheapest and most exploitable labor, governments must provide for basic worker rights and labor standards, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue said during the Labor Summit of the Americas in Denver June 29.

> *"A direct link exists between working conditions in these countries and the economic whirlpool sucking down the standard of living of millions of our families in the United States."*
>
> **— Rep. Marcy Kaptur**

Avoiding the issue ensures that "the new Free Trade Agreement of the Americas doesn't put any restriction on how businesses treat their employees," Donahue said.

Without an enforceable policy, workers here and abroad will continue to see their living standards decline, Donahue added.

Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-Ohio), who joined the Central American workers at a Capitol Hill news conference, pointed to the relationship between jobs and wages in the United States and Latin America. Nearly 300,000 U.S. textile workers have lost their jobs when plants moved to Honduras, El Salvador and the Dominican Republic in the last 20 years.

"A direct link exists between working conditions in these countries and the economic whirlpool sucking down the standard of living for millions of our families in the United States," Kaptur said.

Molina and Viera began their multi-city tour in Miami Beach in late June, addressing the founding UNITE convention. "These two women have incredible courage," said Jesse Friedman, AIFLD's assistant director. "They got off the plane and had to speak to 3,000 delegates. That's pretty intimidating. They did an excellent job."

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Director of Information: Rex Hardesty

Editor: Michael Byrne

Assistant Editors: Candice Johnson, David Kameras, Colleen M. O'Neill, James B. Parks

Staff Writers: Muriel H. Cooper, Mike Hall Sharolyn A. Rosier

Graphics/Layout: Stan Hitt, Hindi M. Fracasse

AFL-CIO Headquarters: 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006
Telephone: (202) 637-5010
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Miners foresee danger below in safety cuts

By Colleen M. O'Neill

The fight for job safety turned to one of the nation's most dangerous occupations as Mine Workers President Richard L. Trumka led a chorus of protests against Republican plans to cut the Mine Safety and Health Administration.

"Many of my members believe that the proponents of this bill do not understand, or worse do not care, about their health and safety or the perils they will face if this legislation is enacted," Trumka told the House Economic and Educational Opportunities subcommittee on work force protections.

"H.R. 1934 is based on the premise that unsafe mines are a thing of the past, that mine owners no longer cut corners when things get tight or simply violate the law because they think no one is watching," he said. "And while the industry today has many large operators who abide by the law and work hard to protect their workers, there are an unacceptable number who still subject their workers to enormous risks, often with fatal results."

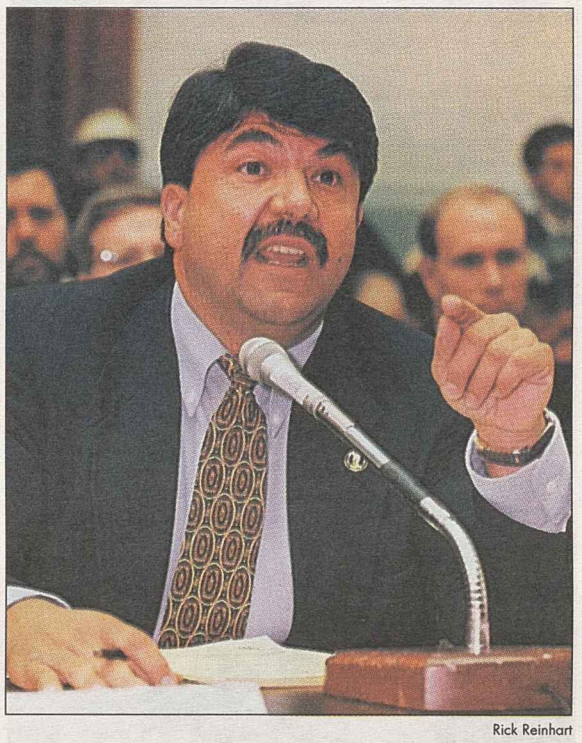
The testimony in the House against legislation by Rep. Cass Ballenger (R-N.C.) that would savage the nation's job safety and health laws came as Democrats in the Senate managed to hold off Majority Leader Robert Dole's regulatory reform proposal, which also would cripple workplace safety programs.

Joining Trumka before Ballenger's subcommittee July 27 were three workers who described their workplace safety experiences.

"If your bill becomes law, the small, non-union mines of eastern Kentucky will become death traps," said Danny Shepherd. "We'll once again see TV news scenes of mines exploding and miners' widows grieving. Much of the progress of the last 25 years will be lost. "Maybe business will prosper, but miners will suffer," said Shepherd, who has worked the small underground mines of his state for 18 years.

A Steelworker from Oregon added another perspective. Lavern A. Melton had just gotten off his shift at the Sunshine Mine in Idaho on May 2, 1972, when the word came the mine was on fire. Ninety-one of his colleagues lost their lives because supervisors delayed telling the workers of the fire — and because there was no MSHA to watch out for workers.

"The main reason for the death of the 91 was a lack of mandatory safety training and a lack of mandatory safety laws covering underground miners," he told lawmakers. The disaster helped give birth to MSHA, noted Melton, who detailed the different outcome that might have been with MSHA in place that fateful May day.



Rick Reinhart

Mine Workers President Richard L. Trumka assails a GOP plan to dismantle the mine safety agency.

Also testifying was Dean Eason, a health and safety representative for UAW Local 5285 at the Freightliner truck plant in Mount Holly, N.C., who said his company, like every other U.S. business, chooses the bottom line over worker safety. "That's why workers need OSHA. That's why you should reject this bill."

Ballenger's bill is loaded with provisions catering to the special interests of industries and employers. The legislation would force workers to go to management first with a complaint, and only allow an OSHA inspection after management had an opportunity to alleviate the problem.

Employers would face sharply reduced fines — and no fines in many cases — thus cutting much of the incentive to comply with regulations. In addition, the legislation would place severe restrictions on the development of new standards to protect workers.

The AFL-CIO's efforts to defeat the Ballenger bill have spanned the nation, including warning more than 300 newspapers in 114 congressional districts in 35 states of the potential devastating effects of H.R. 1834.

Labor is trying to offset an all-out assault on safety and health regulations by GOP and business, said Deborah Berkowitz, safety director for the Food and Commercial Workers' in an AFL-CIO satellite media tour of nearly a dozen television stations.

"Business is trying to settle a score with government," she said. "They're saying 'you've fined us, now we're in control, we've lined the pockets of Republicans and now we're getting rid of these pesky rules.' "

Stand UP lobbying nets some wins

Continued from Page 1

targeted districts. The AFL-CIO's congressional hotline will urge defeat of Republican proposals to cut Medicare, Medicaid, education and workplace safety to fund tax breaks for the rich and big corporations.

Labor's activism resulted in two recent wins, showing that it is possible to turn back some of the attacks on workers and their families.

The House on July 25 beat back an effort to take away the collective bargaining rights of more than 200,000 transit workers. On a 233-186 vote — with 44 Republicans joining with 188 Democrats and one independent — the House stripped a provision from the transportation appropriations bill that would have repealed Section 13(c) of the Federal Transit Act, which guarantees collective bargaining rights for workers whose transit systems receive federal assistance.

A few days earlier, Senate Democrats forced Majority Leader Robert Dole to withdraw a so-called regulatory reform bill (S. 343) after he lost three cloture votes. The AFL-CIO described Dole's bill as "nothing but a smokescreen for an all-out assault on worker protections and safeguards."

The Senate victory was the result of a full-scale effort by organized labor, environmental, civil rights and consumer groups, which convinced most Democratic senators and a handful of moderate GOP members to stand tough and defeat the cloture motions.

"The business community wanted this bill and they wanted it bad. In lobbying senators throughout the week, the business community was adamant that this was going to be the business vote of the year," AFL-CIO Legislative Director Peggy Taylor said.

The bill would have "destroyed many of the worker safety and health regulations and protections now in existence, not to mention those regulations governing safe water and air," Taylor said.

Congressional Republicans continued to raise the ante in the battle against working families by pushing a Labor/HHS and Education appropriations bill that would cut almost $4 billion from education programs and $2 billion from worker protection and training programs — longstanding targets of big business and the right wing.

The bill is expected on the House floor in the first week of August. House members who vote for the appropriations bill will be targeted for a special Stand UP literature campaign being selected by the AFL-CIO for use in their home districts during the recess.

This new tactic, which could hit more than 200 districts, will allow union members to react quickly to hold their representatives accountable for attacks on working families.

Win on 13(c) is first shot in rights fight

By James B. Parks

Organized labor chalked up a rare victory in the 104th Congress as Democrats beat back a Republican effort to strip some 200,000 transportation workers of the right to bargain collectively.

By a 233-186 vote July 25, the House removed a provision from the $38 billion transportation appropriations bill that would have repealed Section 13(c) of the Federal Transit Act.

"We are pleased the Congress stood up for collective bargaining rights of transit workers and rejected the effort to take away their labor protections," said James LaSala, president of the Amalgamated Transit Union.

The attack on Section 13(c) was part of a general assault on worker protections being pursued by the House Republican leadership.

The Labor/HHS appropriations bill includes a 30 percent cut in the budget of the National Labor Relations Board and a provision to revoke President Clinton's executive order barring contracts with companies who permanently replace striking workers. Separate legislation that would sanction company unions is expected be on the House floor before the August recess.

In attacking collective bargaining through repeal of Section 13(c), Republicans had argued that the provision raises transit costs and prevents local agencies from contracting out, changing schedules and making other changes to save money.

"In essence, what you're doing is eliminating workers' right to collective bargaining . . . the ability to stand up for themselves and earn a living wage, and it's not right," said Rep. Patrick J. Kennedy, (D-R.I.)

Rep. Ronald Coleman (D-Texas), ranking minority member of the Appropriations transportation subcommittee, introduced the amendment to delete the repeal of Section 13(c).

Section 13(c) requires that federal transportation grants are fair and equitable and that agencies enter into "protective arrangements" ensuring that the rights of transit employees are protected and that benefits in existing collective bargaining agreements are preserved.

The huge cut in the NLRB budget, approved by the Appropriations Committee July 24, is so drastic it would "cripple the law enforcement procedures and practices that have provided an orderly framework for labor-management relations in the United States for the past 60 years," said Chairman William B. Gould.

The cut would require the permanent layoff of about 600 of the board's 2,000 employees, Gould said. Half the 52 field offices would have to close. Such personnel cutbacks could cause the case backlog to grow from 6,750 to more than 26,000, a whopping 285 percent increase, he added.

All in all, the cuts would cause everyone to lose, Gould said, because cases would be processed slower and labor disputes would "fester longer and rights of employees and employers would not be protected."

The House Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee continued its war on workers by approving the so-called TEAM Act, which would revive company unions. While the full House is expected to vote on the bill before the recess, no action is scheduled in the Senate, where the Education and Labor Committee has held hearings.

The misnamed Teamwork for Employees and Management Act, S.295 and H.R. 743, would lift the 60-year-old ban on certain types of company-sponsored employee committees by amending Section 8(a)(2) of the National Labor Relations Act.

In congressional testimony in June, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue said the TEAM Act is a ruse by management determined to maintain a union-free workplace and develop alternatives to true partnerships. The last thing employers want is to face workers "who enjoy real power because that would threaten their unilateral control over the workplace," he said.

USWA pledges grass-roots fight for rights

Bridgestone/Firestone, Congress given warning

By James B. Parks

The Steelworkers took to the streets of Washington as part of the grass-roots offensive to take back the Congress in 1996.

About 700 delegates to the union's legislative conference staged protests throughout the nation's capital and announced an aggressive campaign to gain a fair contract for Bridgestone/Firestone workers.

"We can't be strong and we can't be progressive unless we have a strong labor movement in America," USWA President George Becker told the conference.

The delegates marched in front of the Republican National Committee headquarters to protest the anti-worker policies the party is pushing.

But the union plans to do much more than march or to lobby in Washington, Becker said. The USWA is developing a grass-roots program that will use new technology to get information to the local level about the issues and what members can do about them.

"We need to establish in every local union a detailed legislative process with networking" to every workplace, every shift, every member and every family to get all local union members involved in the political process, he said.

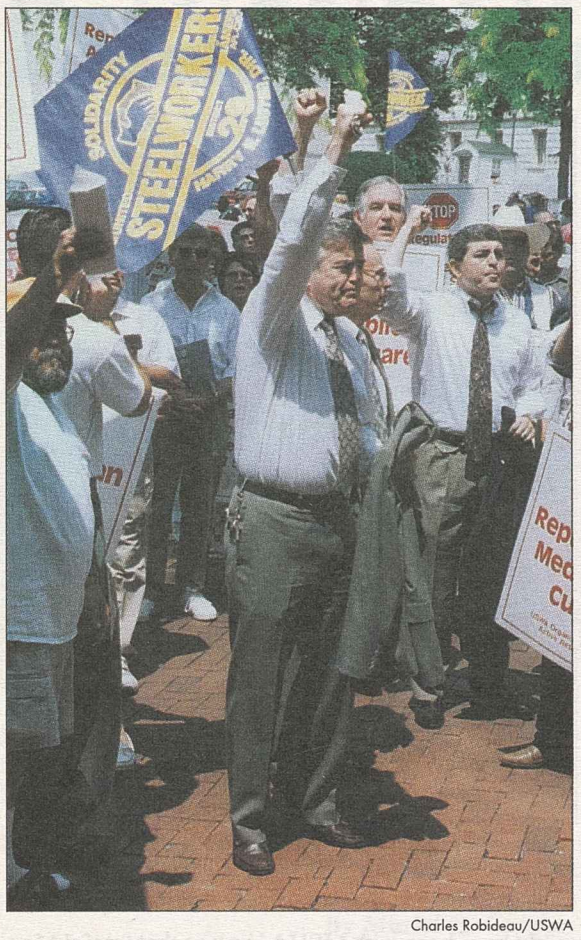
The USWA also will be more selective in how it spends its political campaign monies, Becker said, rejecting so-called friends in the Democratic Party who vote for such anti-worker bills as the North American Free Trade Agreement. "We're going to have a seat at the table before we pass more or any money out," he said.

Rather than give to Democratic congressional committees, the union will put its money into the '95 Project, a coalition of unions, consumer, environmental and senior citizen groups that have targeted 16 congressional districts where they will attempt to oust incumbent Republicans with candidates of their own, Becker said.

Service Employees President John J. Sweeney warned the delegates that "in the backrooms of our nation's capital, the corporate lobbyists are pulling the strings of the Republicans in Congress to hasten our demise."

Earlier in the week, the delegates rallied in front of the Brazilian and Japanese embassies, protesting the use of scab workers from those countries by Bridgestone/Firestone, shutting out Rubber Workers who have not been allowed to return to work.

Becker announced the union will launch a corporate campaign against Bridgestone/Firestone. When the URW merged with the USWA July 1, "their fight became our fight." He promised the union would "muster everything we can" to make sure the Bridgestone/Firestone workers get their jobs back, along with a fair contract.



Charles Robideau/USWA

USWA President George Becker leads a rally in front of the Republican National Committee headquarters.

The URW suspended its strike against the giant Japanese tire manufacturer May 22 and switched strategies in its effort for a new contract. Some 4,200 URW members in five states walked out July 12, 1994, almost three months after their contract had expired. The strike was the longest in tire industry history.

The company has refused to rehire more than 2,000 of the workers in Oklahoma City; Decatur, Ill.; Noblesville, Ind.; and Des Moines, Iowa. "The workers had a legal right to strike," Becker said. "The company gave their jobs away." When the union terminated the strike, the company "should have brought the people back to work," he said.

As part of its campaign, the union plans to leaflet many major sporting events and civic events, including Pittsburgh Pirates home baseball games. The USWA is headquartered in Pittsburgh.

The dispute is taking its toll on the workers. "The folks are holding up as best we can," said Jim Cassie, president of Local 998 in Oklahoma City.

Other speakers at the conference included Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich; Senate Minority Leader Thomas A. Daschle and Sens. Paul S. Sarbanes and Paul Wellstone; House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt and Whip David E. Bonior; Reps. Jim McDermott, Henry A. Waxman, Eleanor Holmes Norton and Patrick Kennedy.

TAA, NAFTA-TAA among targets of training cuts

By David Kameras

Ignoring the axiom against being penny-wise and pound-foolish, Congress is rushing full speed ahead to slash funding for job training programs, including a complete wipeout of trade adjustment assistance.

"Congress is getting ready to gut the programs that can help," said AFL-CIO economist Markley Roberts. "They are looking to cut retraining programs by 20 to 30 percent, to weaken income support during training and to curtail early warning of company layoffs."

The House Appropriations subcommittee on labor, health and human services and education approved, 9-5, a bill that would reduce available monies by 34 percent, from $1.2 billion to $850 million. The number of those eligible for assistance would plummet from 679,000 to 585,000 annually, a cut that "makes absolutely no sense," said Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich.

The Republican majority members on the committee "do not care about working people and the president's priorities," Reich said. He noted that with defense cutbacks and corporate restructuring, 2.5 million workers are permanently losing jobs each year.

The Economic Policy Institute's Larry Mishel castigated the government for its "failure to make a serious reinvestment of the savings in the civilian economy. As we work to reduce the burden of budget deficits on future generations, we are neglecting the human, physical and technological infrastructure on which their economic future depends."

The overall spending measure would slash the Labor Department's allocation from $11.9 billion to $10.2 billion, which would require up to 2,000 reductions in staff. Among other things, it would eliminate the summer youth employment program, their "only window into the world of work," said Reich.

Perhaps most offensive was the slicing of both regular trade adjustment assistance and the TAA program created under NAFTA.

"The harm sustained by workers who lose their jobs because of increased imports or trade agreements such as NAFTA is substantial and has been well documented," AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue told a House Ways and Means subcommittee.

While currently inadequate, the programs have provided essential benefits to trade-injured workers, he said. "If TAA and NAFTA-TAA are terminated or included in a block grant, there will be little or no money for income support, and workers who lose their jobs because of increased imports or trade agreements will no longer have any entitlement to receive assistance.

"Many members of Congress would not have voted for NAFTA had they known that the federal government intended to renege on its commitment to compensate and assist workers who are injured as a result of this trade agreement," he noted.

Targeted pension investment program faces Republican ax

House Republicans are seeking to stifle the use of pension funds to benefit both retirees and the nation's low-income citizens.

The Labor Department's efforts to promote economically targeted investments (ETIs) would be prohibited under the so-called Pension Protection Act, H.R. 1594, which was marked up July 20 by the House Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee.

The bill, introduced by Rep. Jim Saxton (R-N.J.), and an identical measure introduced in the Senate by Sen. Connie Mack (R-Fla.), attack ETIs even though they are designed to provide a sound financial return on investment, as well as such collateral benefits as job creation, low-income housing and infrastructure improvements.

"ETIs provide billions of dollars for investment in American companies and infrastructure," AFL-CIO Legislative Director Peggy Taylor said in a letter to the committee. "These types of investments serve as an economic catalyst while still offering competitive investment returns to pension plan participants and retirees. Any attempt to discourage these sound pension investments should be stopped."

The bill could have serious repercussions if Wall Street investors gain the false impression that ETIs are bad investments or that they cannot make this type of investment, said Jim Campbell, director of the AFL-CIO's National Partnership for Community Investment.

It is ironic, Campbell said, that congressional Republicans are attacking ETIs, which provide jobs and housing for citizens, while ignoring the much larger pension investments in foreign securities. Those securities provide "no benefit to the United States and are extremely risky," he said, citing the "billions in pension funds" affected by the collapse of the Mexican peso.

Part of the problem, Campbell said, is that companies that manage pension funds receive higher transaction fees from foreign securities than from real estate and other investments characteristic of ETIs. "We're more interested in benefits for the retirees than in transaction fees," he said.

The National Partnership was created by the AFL-CIO's Housing Investment and Building Investment Trusts, working with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. In that project and in other investments, HIT/BIT has demonstrated how profitable ETIs can be.

"If we were a publicly traded company, HIT/BIT would be rated No. 1 or No. 2 in rates of return for one year, three years and five years," Campbell said.

HIT's rate of return for the last year was 12.92 percent; for three years, 7.46 percent; for five years, 9.11 percent; and for 10 years, 9.78 percent. Practically all, 98 percent, of the portfolio is guaranteed by the federal government or government-supported entities. Some 382 union pension funds participate in HIT, which now has assets of $1.08 billion.

Union Labor Life Insurance Co.'s J for Jobs program also targets investments to create jobs and needed housing. Its returns have been equally stellar at 9 percent for the 10-year annualized rate as of May 31, 1995, ULLICO reported.

The AFL-CIO Executive Council in 1993 called on pension fund trustees to invest in ETIs so that "pension assets can be a source of long-term financing for these critical projects and serve to leverage federal and state dollars back to the communities."

The council adopted guidelines for domestic investment that include the prudence of the investment, protections against privatization of public services, federal financing of infrastructure projects and labor protections.

— James B. Parks

Unions helping to make disabilities act work

By James B. Parks

In the five years since Congress passed the Americans with Disabilities Act, the law has proven to be a useful tool for unions to help all its members, abled and disabled.

"Many unions found that, as they suspected, the ADA has assisted disabled workers on the job and enabled other brothers and sisters to return to work," said Susana Gomez of the AFL-CIO civil rights department.

The legislation, passed July 26, 1990, extended civil rights guarantees to the disabled. As a result, many unions formed disability committees to help management and disabled workers to identify reasonable and effective accommodations that would allow the disabled person to work. The bill became law two years later.

Unions have found various ways to carry out the law and to find ways to help the disabled to work. The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities (PCEPD) recently cited the Communications Workers for its voluntary effort to provide phones for hospitalized veterans.

The "P.T. Phone Home" project began at CWA's Local 1120 in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., and has benefitted more than 22,000 veterans in 53 hospitals. The workers volunteered their time to install bedside phones to give hospitalized veterans the opportunity to communicate with loved ones. Because there are a large number of patients who are paraplegic, the phone system was equipped with voice-activated dialing.

The Machinists' IAM CARES program is considered a model of what unions can do to aid their disabled members. Launched with a single federal grant in 1980, the program now includes 38 projects serving people with disabilities in 19 cities in the United States and Canada.

IAM CARES provides services to 2,400 workers a year, placing 1,400 in such jobs as assessment, job readiness, job development modification, job training, industrial evaluation, job placement, follow-up and support services.

The union also negotiated the creation of the IAM/Boeing Health and Safety Institute, which developed a return-to-work program to get injured workers back to work as soon as possible.

Long before the ADA was enacted, the Steelworkers used anti-bias clauses in collective bargaining contracts to prohibit discrimination against disabled workers. Matters dealing with disability discrimination are resolved through the grievance process, negotiated joint civil rights committees or the USWA civil rights complaint procedure.

Other union efforts to help disabled workers and to bring employers into compliance with the law include:

- Service Employees Local 82 conducted a survey of 49 major District of Columbia office buildings to determine which ones had obvious barriers that would prevent disabled people from entering the building. Only one of the buildings was found to be accessible to the disabled.
- AFSCME provides extensive training on the ADA, including a curriculum with a 16-minute video. It also makes its magazine available on tape for the visually impaired.
- The Postal Workers sponsor conferences for the hearing-impaired and have negotiated a series of understandings with the Postal Service over job accommodations for its disabled members.
- AFT Local 2 formed a "committee for members who are capably disabled" to focus on concerns of members who needed accommodations to continue working. As a result of the committee's work, physically handicapped teachers have received hardship transfers to sites closer to home; a reader was assigned to a visually impaired teacher for 90 minutes each day to assist with administrative work; a hearing-impaired teacher received a beeper that vibrates to signal fire drills and emergency situations.

Some unions have found it necessary to seek redress through the courts or administrative hearings over employer bias against disabled workers.

The Food and Commercial Workers have filed a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission alleging that Monfort Inc. is discriminating against injured workers at its Grand Island, Neb., meatpacking plant.

The AFL-CIO is deeply involved in implementing the ADA. Vice President Lenore Miller and Civil Rights Director Richard Womack serve on the executive committee of the President's Committee. Miller, president of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, heads the federation's civil rights committee. The labor subcommittee of the PCEPD is chaired by Lela Foreman of CWA.

The federation's training arm, the Human Resources Development Institute, conducts workshops and provides technical assistance to unions on the ADA.

'A nation that cares' restated as AFL-CIO goal

By Muriel H. Cooper

Faced with a Congress seemingly bent on limiting access to the American dream — home ownership, educational opportunities and decent wages — the services of union and community activists are desperately needed.

That message was delivered over and over to more than 500 delegates to the 33rd AFL-CIO National Conference on Community Services meeting in Washington July 17-20.

Letter Carriers President Vincent R. Sombrotto, chair of the federation's Committee on Community Services, decried the changing political tide that thinks only of "I" and "me" and lives by the law of the jungle.

"Nineteen percent of the children in this country go to bed hungry every night. We've got to return to a nation that cares about its people," said Sombrotto. "We've got to organize around candidates who are sympathetic to our issues. We don't need government on our backs, but we do need government on our side. That's our challenge."

Speaker after speaker blasted the new Republican majority in the 104th Congress, which continues to try to dismantle services that help the most vulnerable Americans.

"We must use the AFL-CIO Stand UP campaign to mobilize Americans, fortify and support the right to organize and bargain collectively, and defend the public policies that help working families," said Green P. Lewis, director of the AFL-CIO Department of Community Services.

Bricklayers President John T. Joyce saluted efforts by unionists to protect progressive housing policies, which have allowed hundreds of families to buy their own homes. The AFL-CIO has 10 percent of its pension funds invested in housing, and is considering increasing that to 25 or even 30 percent, said Joyce, who heads the AFL-CIO's pension committee.

He pointed out that the AFL-CIO's Union Privilege program sponsors home purchases through creative financing, and that unions are training public housing residents in programs that will lead to apprenticeships and stable jobs. "All of these services strengthen our commitment of improving low-income housing and basic shelter for the working poor," Joyce said.

Delegates also heard about Habitat for Humanity, an organization working with the AFL-CIO to build homes for low-income families across the country.

The conference honored five cities as "model cities" for outstanding programs developed cooperatively by local unions, the United Way of America and volunteer agencies. The 1995 winners are St. Paul, Minn.; Richmond, Va.; Denver; Peoria, Ill.; and Gates Ferry, Conn.

The United Way recognized three union members with the 1995 Joseph A. Beirne Award, jointly presented to Nyals Kittel of the Steelworkers, V. Daniel Radford of the Cincinnati AFL-CIO and Vickie J. Smeltzer of UNITE. "We have so much in common with union members who want to make sure those in need are not alone," said United Way president Elaine Chao.

Guest speakers at the four-day conference included Jim Baker, executive assistant to AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland; Presidents George Kourpias of the Machinists, Morton Bahr of the Communications Workers and James J. Norton of the Graphic Communications Union; Edward A. Mohler, president of the Maryland AFL-CIO; Daniel LeBlanc, president of the Virginia AFL-CIO; Robert F. Harbrant, president of the AFL-CIO Food and Allied Service Trades Department; Richard Walsh, director of the AFL-CIO Committee on Political Education; and Peggy Taylor, AFL-CIO legislative director.

Also addressing the conference were Gloria Johnson of the Clinton administration's Corporation for National Services, Bonnie J. Campbell of the Justice Department's Office of Violence Against Women and Thomas L. Jones of the Washington Office for Habitat for Humanity.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Rep. John Lewis (D-Ga.) is greeted by AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland, who presented the civil rights activist with the AFL-CIO's Murray-Green-Meany Award for Humanitarian Service.

Clinton stand on affirmative action praised by labor

The AFL-CIO praised President Clinton's defense of government affirmative action programs and reaffirmed its commitment to using the programs to ensure equal rights for all Americans.

"Our society has not yet attained the ideal of being color blind or gender-neutral," AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland said. "The hard reality is that a long history of discrimination cannot be made to disappear in a few years.

"And the equally hard reality is that for the foreseeable future, affirmative action programs are necessary and essential to correcting the past and improving the future."

Kirkland urged Congress to follow Clinton's example "and not allow government to compromise the progress that has been made and can be made by weakening its critical affirmative action role."

After a review of federal affirmative action programs, Clinton directed departments to eliminate or reform any program that "creates a quota, creates preferences for unqualified individuals, creates reverse discrimination or continues even after its equal opportunity purposes have been achieved."

But Clinton reaffirmed "the principle of affirmative action" while vowing to fix the practices. "We should have a simple slogan: Mend it but don't end it.

"It is in our moral, legal and practical interest to see that every person can make the most of his own life," Clinton said. "In the fight for the future, we need all hands on deck. And, some of those hands still need a helping hand."

The president emphasized that affirmative action did not cause the great economic problems of the American middle class and said, "We must also admit that affirmative action alone won't solve the problems of minorities and women who seek to be a part of the American dream."

"To do that, we have to have an economic strategy that reverses the decline in wages and the growth of poverty among working people. Without that, women, minorities and white males will all be in trouble in the future."

In a letter to Clinton earlier this year, Kirkland reminded the president of organized labor's long-standing commitment to affirmative action and urged him to endorse the practice "as a lawful, proved and effective means of furthering equal opportunity in this country."



Artists' block

Writer, performer unions seek to protect creative work

By Colleen M. O'Neill

In the brave new world of telecommunications technology, it is possible to visit a museum, order groceries and steal ideas — all without leaving your chair.

Interactive computers offer the user the ability to enrich one's life immeasurably, but also allow the opportunity to take ideas, performances or the turn of a phrase without the creator receiving credit. It is this ongoing threat that has unions representing writers and performers looking for ways to ensure proper credit for jobs well done.

The quest has taken on greater importance with the explosion of the global "information superhighway" and the myriad possibilities engendered by the very latest technology.

"Professional and technical union folks equate this to the Industrial Revolution," said Jack Golodner, president of the AFL-CIO's Department for Professional Employees. "That revolution was very difficult to live through, the upheaval was tremendous, but the result was immeasurable."

Golodner, one of two labor representatives on a presidential advisory council examining the nation's information infrastructure, identified several tracks for concern:

- Intellectual property — Creators must be awarded proper compensation for information now available worldwide.
- Privacy — Information provided by workers must be kept private and confidential, and electronic surveillance should be justified and kept to a minimum.
- Access — Providers and consumers must have access both to the information available and to a means of participation in the activities along the information superhighway.

The purloined letters

Eleven members of the National Writers Union, an affiliated national local of the UAW, have a lawsuit pending against a group of publishers and database operators that hinges on the question of illegal digital distribution of the writers' material.

"At the heart of it, it's a contract issue," said Maria Pallante, until recently the NWU executive director. "We're dealing with new grants of rights under old contract language. That's always the case with old contracts and new techonology."

Past practice has been that writers give one-time publication rights in North America for a magazine to publish a story, while retaining all other rights. The position of the writers, then, is that the publishing company does not retain the right to sell to a database or put that material on line of its own accord; rather, that constitutes an electronic right that may be given only by the writer.

Currently, however, publishers are bypassing that stance and claiming serial rights have been extended to include the electronic industry — leaving the publisher and the database to make money on the writer's work without the writer's permission.

Once it has been established to be a contract issue, Pallante said, the notion of copyright infringement comes into play. That brings up the need to define infringement in an electronic world — is it infringement simply because the material is on line, or because that paper or magazine in which it appears is read, or does the material need to be transmitted or physically downloaded for infringement to occur?

No protection for performers

Writers at least have a body of copyright law, Golodner pointed out. Performers do not have copyright protections, so the push on that front is to reform copyright laws domestically and internationally.

Legislation passed several years ago to regulate home copying of recorded material was a landmark, Golodner said, because "it wrote into the law that the performer is a creative person and entitled to a share. A principle was established that is most important."

"The United States is one of the few countries in the world that recognizes recorded programs as a copyright item but doesn't attach a performance right" — meaning the right for payment each time the song is played by a radio station or restaurant/bar, or the videotape is rented out for home viewing.

Golodner noted that the nation is moving toward direct digital transmission of audio recordings — a development that would allow people with the proper equipment to program their own preferences and set up a sort of mini-radio station in their home. Unless such a right to payment per performance is established, those companies that deliver sound recordings directly to the home won't have to pay a dime to recording companies and the artists involved for each transmission.

On an international scope, U.S. copyright laws are out of date and out of sync, Golodner said, making it more difficult for artists to recoup royalties overseas.

"Unless we can harmonize our copyright laws with the rest of the world, we're going to be in deep trouble," he said, if the nation continues to export audio and video products, which account for a vast portion of U.S. trade.

To that end, solutions are being sought through the World Intellectual Property Organization, a United Nations agency; the International Labor Organization; and several provisions of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

Legislative, legal remedies

Another potential solution rests in pending legislation on Capitol Hill. Introduced by Sens. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) and Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) and Rep. Carlos J. Moorhead (R-Calif.), S. 227 and H.R. 1506 would grant musical artists a performance right. The measure is moving toward markup in the Senate, with hearings being held in the House.

At one such hearing on June 28, the president of the Recording Musicians' Association of the United States and Canada laid out for the House Judiciary subcommittee on intellectual property and judicial administration the arguments in favor of the legislation.

"One of the best examples I can think of to demonstrate the creative contribution of anonymous instrumental and vocal performers — and thus the justification for them to enjoy a performance right in sound recordings — is in the case of jazz," Dennis Dreith of the Musicians testified. "More often than not, the improvised elements of jazz recordings are as recognized as the original compositions themselves.

"Yet, because of an anachronism in current copyright law, the composers are paid royalties for the performances of their compositions and the jazz performers receive nothing."

Dreith noted that performers get a certain satisfaction from a job well done that is rare among existing professions, but that performers and their families must be taken care of financially as well.

The public may think of performers as rich, Dreith said, but "we know the quintessentially American art forms of pop, jazz and rock music — and the successful American business, the recording industry — are built in major part upon the creative work of musicians and vocalists whose economic status ranges from struggling to just comfortable."

Superhighway work in progress

While pursuing protections through the courts, the NWU also is seeking an agreement with database companies. CARL Corp.'s UnCover database of magazine and journal articles and the NWU's Operation Magazine Index are moving toward an agreement for a transaction-based creator's royalty system, Pallante said.

That system would pay copyright fees on full-text works ordered through the database, and includes a provision for a full accounting from CARL.

"Publishers say they can't keep track of every time an article is accessed, but what we've learned from CARL is that isn't true," Pallante said. "We've established with CARL that there is a market that can be directly licensed. Writers don't want their material pulled, they want people to have access.

"Electronic distribution rights are no different than foreign translations or screen adaptations — they're no different than what's always gone on," she said.

The AFL-CIO Executive Council in May asserted its support for clear federal policies "aimed at ensuring universal and affordable access to these increasingly vital services" to end the division of the country into "information haves" and "information have-nots."

In addition, "government policy for the information superhighway should be directed at assuring that the workers who produce, disseminate and deliver information do so under good wages, standards and working conditions," the AFL-CIO said. "Federal law should guarantee that they have a genuine voice on the job through independent trade unions and adequate protection of their privacy rights."

Furthermore, the council urged the Clinton administration and Congress to "take the actions necessary to assure that all Americans have affordable access to a national information infrastructure."



Photo by Allen Zak

Ohio trade unionists march to the statehouse in Columbus to lobby legislators on a range of bills introduced by Republicans that target worker rights.

GOP war on workers spreads across country

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

The story is the same across the country: Workers are facing an unparalleled assault from lawmakers.

Following the new leadership in Congress, Republicans in state legislatures have developed a conservative, fast-track agenda that rewards businesses and insurance companies and punishes workers.

"It's the war on workers, part two," said Joe Shantz, director of the AFL-CIO Department of Organization and Field Services. "Obviously, state GOP leaders are taking a cue from Gingrich and Dole at the federal level. It's open season on workers and their families in statehouses."

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, Election Day 1994 gave the GOP its biggest state legislative victory in 28 years. Not since the Eisenhower coattails in 1956 have the Democrats controlled so few state chambers.

With the GOP closing the circle in Illinois by adding the state House to its majority, a new law was enacted prohibiting Chicago teachers from striking. Legislators also sought to limit public employee collective bargaining, repeal state prevailing wage laws and the Road Worker Safety Act and to pass an anti-worker tort-reform bill.

"Ultimately, labor's worst fears — that workers' compensation, unemployment insurance, prevailing wage and collective bargaining laws would be destroyed — were not realized during the Republicans' first year of complete control," said Illinois AFL-CIO President Don Johnson.

But the future may depend on labor's efforts to recreate the well-orchestrated grass-roots campaign used to defeat the workers' compensation bill — including phone banks, an informational mailer, educational meetings, fact sheets and one-on-one legislative meetings in the district.

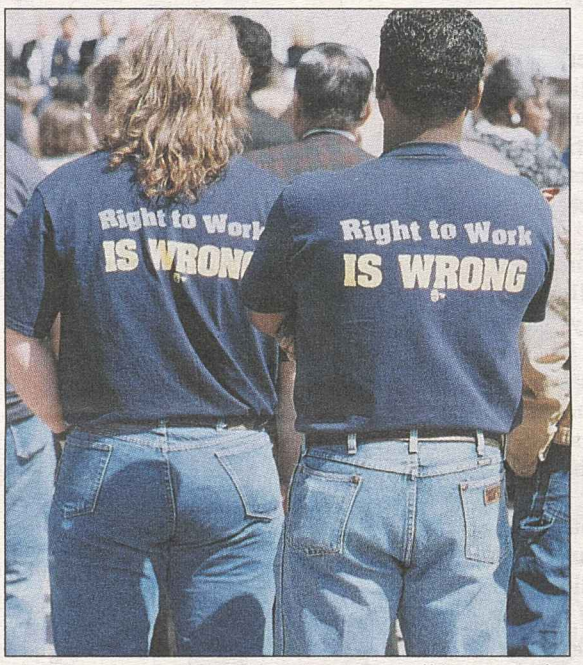
Some 6,000 union members also rallied at the state capital on May 10, Labor Lobby Day.

"It's easy for the legislators to forget their constituents when they're out of their districts, but when their constituents are right there in the capital, it's a great reminder that they have to represent workers too," said Margaret Blackshere, secretary-treasurer of the state federation.

One prevailing theory is that House Republicans did not want to jeopardize their tenuous majority. If only 2,086 people had switched their votes in 1994, Democrats would still be in control of the House.

In Indiana, "we all knew it would be a tough battle in the legislature, but none of us really had any idea of just how mean-spirited the new Republican-controlled House and Senate would actually be or how far they would go," said Indiana AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Jerry T. Payne.

Many legislators wholeheartedly embraced the agenda of the Indiana Chamber of Commerce, the Indiana Insurance Institute and the Indiana Manufacturers Association, Payne said. The chamber's governmental affairs committee identified four top priorities — prevailing wage, teachers' fair share, tort reform and teachers' retirement fund — all of which passed in the legislature.



Oklahoma AFL-CIO photo

These Oklahoma unionists, like many across the country, were fighting "right-to-work" legislation.

Indiana labor fears that the 1995 action curtailing union security for teachers has opened the door for a full blown right-to-work bill for all workers next year, said Payne.

In Kansas, labor has been able to keep most of the bad legislation in committee because of its relationship with the new speaker of the House, Tim Shallenburger, said Jim DeHoff, secretary-treasurer of the state federation.

Labor has been able to get prevailing wage legislation and a bill to gain service fees in lieu of union dues introduced in every session since 1987, when then-Governor Mike Hayden pushed through the repeal of the state's little Davis-Bacon law.

"We will continue to work to get this legislation passed, but realistically it just isn't going to happen until the numbers change drastically in both houses," DeHoff explained. "With the current makeup, there is virtually no hope of passing any pro-worker legislation."

Labor's last line of defense against Michigan's anti-worker Gov. John Engler (R) was severely weakened when Republicans gained control of the state House. A 58-vote margin of victory in one district gave the Republicans a slim 56-54 vote majority.

Now Republicans chair the committees, set the agenda and have the ability to pass a bill into law without any Democratic votes, said Tim Hughes, legislative director for the Michigan AFL-CIO.

On basic workplace issues, Republican legislators have a voting record ranging from 0 percent to 15 percent, Hughes said. Democrats vote right generally 80 percent to 100 percent of the time, he added.

Efforts to gut workers' compensation and the state's occupational safety and health program are expected in the next session.

"But we need to get ready for the 1996 elections now so that we can reverse the legislative trend and put Michigan back on a more progressive, worker-friendly path," Hughes added. "The old saying, 'you do your best lobbying on Election Day,' is certainly the case in 1996."

Democrats control both houses of the legislature in Minnesota, but that was little help to workers on taxes, budget, regulatory and social issues, said Minnesota AFL-CIO President Bernard L. Brommer. For example, the legislature passed a bill that cuts workers' compensation benefits by 33 percent.

Despite booming job growth, record low unemployment and a growth rate for business firms that far outpaces all neighboring states, Brommer explained, a majority of legislators were persuaded that the sky is falling and Minnesota workers' compensation costs are driving businesses from the state. In fact, the state's workers' compensation costs are below the national average.

"The new buzzword is 'competitiveness,' and there will be continuing attacks on anything that regulates or is burdensome to business, including OSHA, prevailing wage, minimum wage, workers' compensation and collective bargaining," Brommer added.

Conservative Democrats also pose a problem in Missouri, said Daniel J. McVey, president of the state AFL-CIO. "We were successful in stopping assaults on pro-worker laws, but we didn't achieve our goals."

With a Democratic governor who is supportive and a Democratic-controlled House and Senate, "we should be able to count on more support in our efforts to secure needed worker-friendly laws," said McVey, who was disappointed in the continuing failure to gain collective bargaining rights for public employees.

Democrats in West Virginia enacted a workers' compensation bill that severely curtails eligibility and benefits. "Because of the meanness of workers' compensation reform, the union movement will be making a special effort to defeat those who voted against workers," said West Virginia AFL-CIO President Joe Powell.

In Montana, the November 1994 elections resulted in Republican takeover of the state Senate and firmed up GOP control of the state House. A moderate Republican governor helped turn back some of the worst legislation even as he signed anti-labor workers' compensation and privatization bills, said Montana AFL-CIO President Donald L. Judge.

In New Hampshire, labor won a battle against "right to work" even though proponents had been touting public support for the legislation. The New Hampshire AFL-CIO hired an independent polling firm to show there was little support for the anti-union measure.

Public employees have had plenty of trouble with the new Republican governor of New Jersey, where the GOP also rules the legislature. Still, "we talk to members of both political parties," said Charles H. Marciante, president of the New Jersey AFL-CIO. "The trade union movement is strong enough so that issues such as right to work don't even come up for consideration."

The legislature considered right to work once 20

Continued on Page 10

The states by the issues

Following is a state-by-state rundown of how workers' issues have fared in the legislatures:

Alabama: Election of Republican governor didn't change legislative climate much. Unemployment insurance and workers' compensation legislation never made it to the floor of either chamber.

Alaska: A pro-worker bill on workers' compensation signed into law.

Arizona: Republicans remained in control of state government, but committees killed three anti-worker measures — to repeal Davis-Bacon, take away fair-share fees for school employees and a privatization bill. Legislation was enacted that extends the Arizona State Apprenticeship Advisory Council, creates funding for several thousand summer jobs for youth and increases retirement benefits for all public employee retirement systems.

Arkansas: A mixed bag from Democratic state government: A bill to exempt public works construction projects from Davis-Bacon was killed in committee, but another bill brought the state into compliance with federal Motor Voter Registration Act. Meanwhile, a 1993 workers' compensation benefit increase went into effect, allowing fewer workers to qualify.

California: The GOP took over the House in November, and this year sponsored a right-to-work bill for public employees and a bill to repeal Davis-Bacon. Both were killed in committee. An unemployment insurance benefit increase passed in the Senate, but the House did not act. Workers' comp legislation did not get out of committee. No action was taken on several privatization bills.

Colorado: A right-to-work bill passed in Senate committee but died on the floor, and a slew of anti-worker bills died in committee: a measure prohibiting public employees, except mass transportation workers, from striking; a measure requiring public employee unions to file annual financial reports; and extension of privatization laws to personal service contracts. A measure that limited workers' compensation benefits for the mentally ill died on the Senate floor.

Connecticut: New Republican governor and Senate majority succeeded in restricting unemployment insurance, but bills to repeal Davis-Bacon and limit public employee collective bargaining died on the floor.

Delaware: Good news for emergency workers, who gained prevailing wages under a new law, and for the unemployed, who were voted increased unemployment insurance benefits.

Florida: The governor signed a new law requiring municipalities to fund provisions in public employee union contracts. Legislation to privatize the state Department of Commerce was killed in committee.

Georgia: Fair-share legislation was reported out of committee but died on the floor.

Hawaii: A public employee collective bargaining bill was enacted into law, but a bill to increase unemployment insurance benefits was killed in committee.

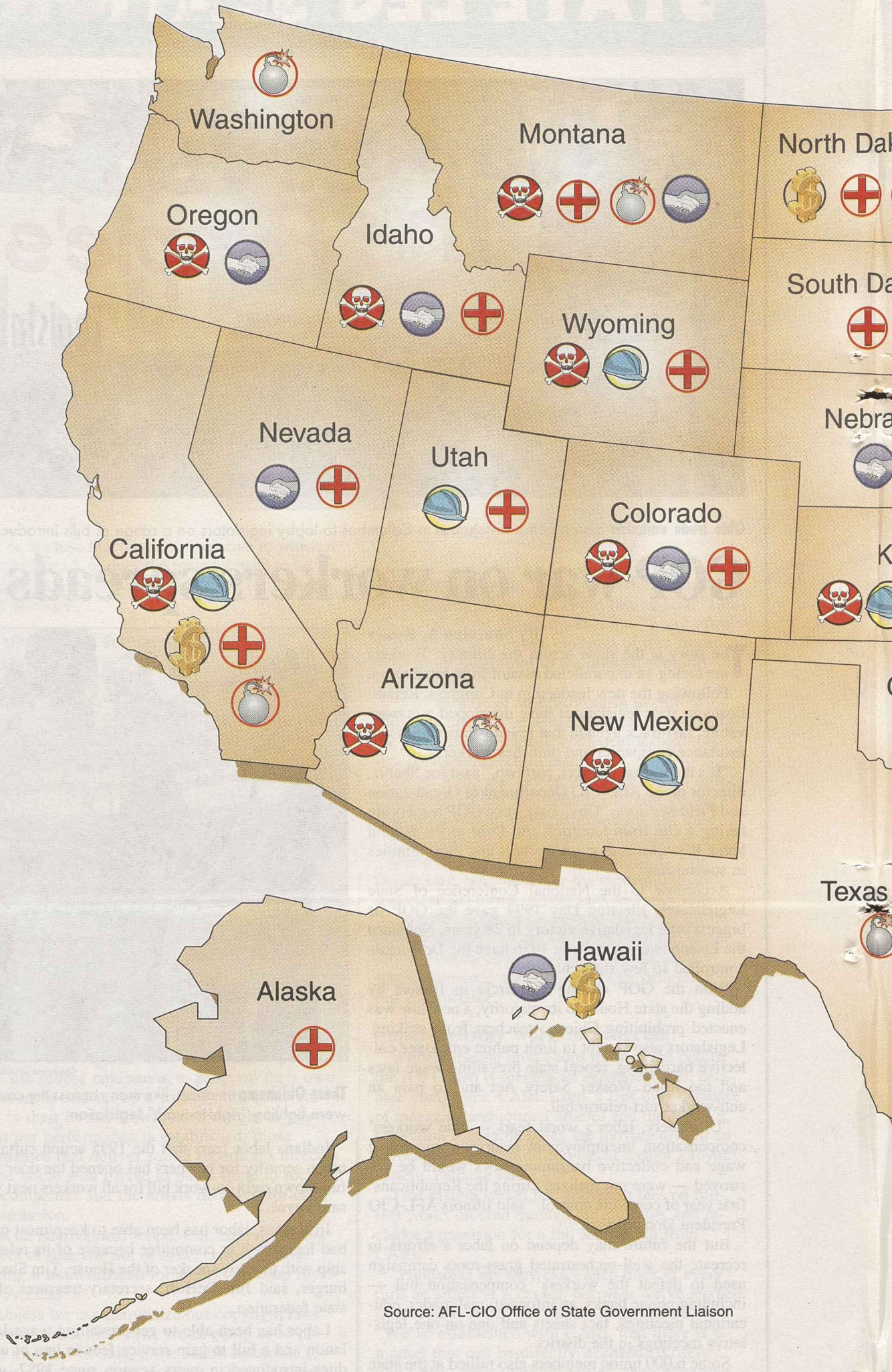
Idaho: A new GOP governor blessed the extension of the state's "right-to-work" law to public employees. Two anti-worker bills were killed in committee: prohibiting public employee collective bargaining for teachers, fire fighters and state employees, and requiring workers to prove injuries by "objective medical evidence" in workers' compensation claims.

Illinois: With Republicans gaining control of both chambers, a new law was enacted prohibiting Chicago teachers from striking. The Senate also passed a private school vouchers bill and an attack on workers' compensation. Killed in committee was legislation to repeal the state prevailing wage law and a measure to restrict public employee collective bargaining over layoffs, wages, hours and working conditions.

Indiana: A new law drastically altering the state's prevailing wage law was overturned by the courts, but a "right-to-work" bill for teachers was enacted. Attacks on unemployment insurance and workers' compensation were approved by committee but died on the floor. A private school vouchers measure was defeated in both chambers.

Iowa: Attacks on public employee collective bargaining and workers' compensation were approved by committee, but died on the floor.

Kansas: Held over to the 1996 session: legislation on fair-share service fees, disqualification of unemployment benefits during strikes, prohibition of release of employer from liability in workers' compensation cases and repeal of the state prevailing wage.



Source: AFL-CIO Office of State Government Liaison

Kentucky: Not in session in 1995.

Louisiana: Democratic-controlled government enacted an increase in unemployment insurance.

Maine: Legislation to repeal Davis-Bacon was killed in committee; new law signed to increase unemployment insurance benefits.

Maryland: Right-to-work bill and measure to repeal Davis-Bacon were killed in committee, but a privatization bill was enacted into law. An increase in unemployment insurance also was enacted.

Massachusetts: Legislation to clarify language for unemployment insurance and restore benefit levels for workers' compensation were held over for study. A bill granting health coverage to workers during a disability was killed in committee.

Michigan: Legislation to cut unemployment insurance benefits was enacted into law by all-Republican state government.

Minnesota: Floor amendments to repeal Davis-Bacon, privatize state government operations and undermine public employee collective bargaining were defeated. A workers' compensation bill that weakens benefits and a measure to increase unemployment insurance were enacted.

Mississippi: Legislation was enacted to increase unemployment benefits. A floor amendment to privatize the state Department of Health and Human Services was defeated.

Missouri: Legislation to repeal Davis-Bacon was killed in committee, while an attack on workers' compensation was approved in committee but died on the floor. An effort to expand public employee collective bargaining was approved in committee but died on the floor.

Montana: Right-to-work legislation was killed in committee, but anti-labor workers' compensation and privatization bills were signed into law. Bills restricting public employee collective bargaining died in committee. Legislation was enacted requiring that unemployment benefits be cut off if a worker hasn't participated in a retraining program within 10 weeks of layoff.

Nebraska: Labor-supported legislation to improve public employee collective bargaining was enacted into law.

Nevada: Legislation to extend public employee collective bargaining rights died in committee, but pro-labor workers' compensation legislation was enacted into law.

New Hampshire: Right-to-work legislation was approved by committee but was defeated in a vote by the full House. A bill to restrict public employee collective



bargaining was killed in committee.

New Jersey: Legislation to increase unemployment insurance benefits was enacted. The new Republican governor also privatized 23 department of motor vehicle offices.

New Mexico: Right to work and repeal of Davis-Bacon were defeated in committee.

New York: Action is still pending on right-to-work and pro-labor workers' compensation legislation. A bill to restrict public employee collective bargaining was killed in committee.

North Carolina: Several bills sought to limit workers' health and safety protections, but they were either killed in committee or on the floor.

North Dakota: The GOP-controlled government enacted laws weakening workers' compensation and privatizing government operations. A bill to increase unemployment insurance benefits was reported by committee but died on the floor.

Ohio: Measures to repeal Davis-Bacon and privatize public services passed in the House and are pending in the Senate. Legislation to restrict public employee collective bargaining was killed in committee.

Oklahoma: Right-to-work legislation passed in the House but was defeated in the Senate.

Oregon: Right-to-work legislation passed in the Senate but the House voted to place the issue on the 1996 ballot. A bill to restrict public employee collective bargaining was enacted into law.

Pennsylvania: Bills to repeal Davis-Bacon, privatize public services and decrease unemployment insurance were approved in committee but killed on the floor. Repeal of agency fair-share fees for school and local government employees passed in the House and is pending in the Senate.

Rhode Island: Right-to-work legislation was killed in committee and repeal of Davis-Bacon passed in the House but died in the Senate.

South Carolina: Legislation to increase workers' compensation is pending action. Term limits for members of the state legislature passed in the House and is pending in the Senate.

South Dakota: Legislation to weaken workers' compensation was enacted.

Tennessee: Legislation to decrease unemployment insurance benefits was enacted, and anti-labor workers' compensation legislation was killed in committee.

Texas: The Democratic legislature passed, and the new Republican governor signed, major education reform that improves protections and due process for teachers, as well as a provision for dues check-off for Fire Fighters. Efforts to privatize state and local jobs were defeated in committee.

Utah: Legislation to repeal Davis-Bacon and weaken workers' compensation were enacted.

Vermont: Bills were enacted to improve workers' compensation rules and add money to the apprenticeship training program while shifting the costs of the hourly course fee from the worker to the employer.

Virginia: Pro-labor workers' compensation legislation was vetoed by the governor.

Washington: Privatization legislation was enacted.

West Virginia: Legislation to weaken workers' compensation was enacted.

Wisconsin: Privatization legislation was enacted, but a floor amendment that restricted public employee collective bargaining was defeated. A pro-labor workers' compensation law was passed, while a bill to increase unemployment insurance benefits is pending action.

Wyoming: Right-to-work repeal was approved by committee but died on the floor. The GOP legislature approved, and the governor signed, a pro-labor Davis-Bacon law, but it also enacted a bill to weaken workers' compensation benefits.

State legislatures battlegrounds in war on workers

Controlling Party
Shading = 1994 takeover

State	Gov.	House	Senate	RTW	WAGE	PUBLIC	UI	COMP	PRIV
Alabama	GOP	DEM	DEM				?	?	
Alaska	DEM	GOP	GOP					✍	
Arizona	GOP	GOP	GOP	✖	✖				✖
Arkansas	DEM	DEM	DEM		✖			✍	
California	GOP	GOP	DEM	✖	✖		▲?	✖	✖
Colorado	DEM	GOP	GOP	☛✖		✖		☛✖	
Connecticut	GOP	DEM	GOP		☛✖	☛✖	✍		
Delaware	DEM	GOP	DEM		✍		✍		
Florida	DEM	DEM	GOP			✍			✖
Georgia	DEM	DEM	DEM	☛✖					
Hawaii	DEM	DEM	DEM			✍	✖		
Idaho	GOP	GOP	GOP	✍		✖		✖	
Illinois	GOP	GOP	GOP		✖	✍		▲▼	✍
Indiana	DEM	GOP	GOP	✍	✍		☛✖	☛✖	↘
Iowa	GOP	GOP	DEM			☛✖		☛✖	
Kansas	GOP	GOP	GOP	?	?		?	?	
Kentucky	DEM	DEM	DEM	*Not in session in 1995*					
Louisiana	DEM	DEM	DEM				✍		
Maine	IND	DEM	GOP		✖		✍		
Maryland	DEM	DEM	DEM	✖	✖		✍		✍
Massachusetts	GOP	DEM	DEM				?	?	
Michigan	GOP	GOP	GOP				✍		
Minnesota	GOP	DEM	DEM		↘	↘	✍	✍	↘
Mississippi	GOP	DEM	DEM				✍		↘
Missouri	DEM	DEM	DEM		✖	☛✖		☛✖	
Montana	GOP	GOP	GOP	✖				✍	✍
Nebraska	DEM	UNI	UNI			✍			
Nevada	DEM	TIE	GOP			✖		✍	
N. Hampshire	GOP	GOP	GOP	☛✖		✖			
New Jersey	GOP	GOP	GOP				✍		
New Mexico	GOP	DEM	DEM	✖	✖				
New York	GOP	DEM	GOP	?		✖		?	
N. Carolina	DEM	GOP	DEM						
N. Dakota	GOP	GOP	GOP				☛✖	✍	✍
Ohio	GOP	GOP	GOP		▲?	✖			▲?
Oklahoma	GOP	DEM	DEM	▲▼					
Oregon	DEM	GOP	GOP	▲▼		✍			
Pennsylvania	GOP	GOP	GOP	▲?	☛✖		☛✖		☛✖
Rhode Island	GOP	DEM	DEM	✖	▲▼				
S. Carolina	GOP	GOP	DEM					?	
S. Dakota	GOP	GOP	GOP					✍	
Tennessee	GOP	DEM	DEM				✍	✖	
Texas	GOP	DEM	DEM						✖
Utah	GOP	GOP	GOP		✍			✍	
Vermont	DEM	DEM	GOP					✍	
Virginia	GOP	DEM	DEM					☒	
Washington	DEM	GOP	DEM						✍
W. Virginia	DEM	DEM	DEM					✍	
Wisconsin	GOP	GOP	GOP			↘	?	✍	✍
Wyoming	GOP	GOP	GOP	☛✖	✍			✍	

KEY

✖ = Killed in committee
☛✖ = Approved/reported by committee; died on floor
↘ = Floor amendment defeated
▲? = Passed one chamber; pending in other chamber
▲▼ = Passed one chamber; died in second
✔ = Approved by legislature
? = Action pending
✍ = Enacted into law
☒ = Vetoed

Source: Office of State Gov't. Liaison, AFL-CIO

RTW = Right to Work
WAGE = Little Davis-Bacon Law
PUBLIC = Public Employee Collective Bargaining
UI = Unemployment Insurance
COMP = Workers' Compensation
PRIV = Privatization

■ = **Favorable legislation**
■ = **Unfavorable legislation**

Continued from Page 7

years ago and the sponsoring legislator lost his election that same year, Marciante pointed out.

In New York, labor won legislation that protects benefit levels for unemployment insurance benefits and calls for alternative dispute resolution in workers' compensation claims. The legislature also renewed the agency shop law.

"The more traditional labor issues such as minimum wage and workers' compensation are scheduled for review next year," said New York State AFL-CIO President Edward J. Cleary.

In California, where Democrats controlled both chambers for 40 years before the 1994 elections, right to work was introduced for the first time since 1968, said John F. Henning, secretary-treasurer of the California AFL-CIO. "Given the discipline of the GOP, that bill will pass the lower house, so we will have the fight of our lives next year."

The makeup of the Nevada legislature could have spelled disaster for unions, said Danny L. Thompson, COPE director for the Nevada AFL-CIO. "However, the result was better than expected. In the end, not only did we leave with what we came with, but in some cases more."

The legislature approved more money for state employees — an 8 percent pay increase; established standards and procedures for the operation of cranes; and encouraged purchase of local agricultural products.

In Mississippi, legislators introduced anti-worker legislation but with no intention of pushing for passage, said Neal Fowler, president of the Mississippi AFL-CIO. "They want to be able to tell their constituents that they tried to get something done but nobody else would help them."

Some legislators wanted to privatize the department of health and human services, "but I have never seen a bill get defeated so many times and then come roaring back at us," Fowler said.

Utah AFL-CIO President Eddie P. Mayne, who was elected last November to the state House, decried the trend toward deregulation at the expense of worker rights. "There is an urgent need for a greater involvement on the part of working people in the election of their state government," he declared.

In North Dakota, the labor commissioner has set the standard for anti-union animus, pushing legislation to register every union member and retiree with his office and to set up a union member withdrawal center in his office.

At labor's urging, the bill was withdrawn by the Senate, said David L. Kemnitz, president of the North Dakota AFL-CIO.

Labor is using a variety of tactics to fight back against the onslaught, including organizing coalitions, legislative action committees and public lobbying campaigns.

"We instituted a legislative lobbying program with a database of 1,200 activists, who were sent biweekly legislative status reports, along with special alerts on crucial bills," said Idaho AFL-CIO President Randy Ambuehl. "Large industrial unions in key committee member districts were targeted with special alerts by FAX to put the heat on committee members."

The state federation also formed a coalition with health insurance companies, the Idaho Medical Association, the Idaho Hospital Association and trial lawyers to successfully fight an attack on workers' compensation.

"Enough heat was put on the House Human Resource Committee that sponsors asked to hold the bill over to the last committee meeting of the session to allow it to be printed for discussion between sessions," said Ambuehl. The last meeting was cancelled.

Forming coalitions has also worked in Pennsylvania, where labor joined community, religious and civil rights organizations to fight back efforts to grant private school vouchers. The legislation alone would have cost the state $250 million a year in state taxes.

"The assault on state labor laws is staggering in scope and scale," said AFL-CIO Department of Organization and Field Services Assistant Director Mike Gildea, who also directs the department's Office of State Government Liaison. "The really bad news is that this is just the first year of their legislative reign of terror."

Staley families find helping hands

By James B. Parks

For Duane Yeakel, the Paperworkers' Adopt-a-Family program for locked-out workers at A.E. Staley has been a "blessing from God."

One month before Staley workers, some with 35 years' seniority, were locked out in June 1993, Yeakel, then 42, and his 43-year-old wife had a baby boy. Yeakel's wife developed serious complications during the pregnancy that led to a condition that requires four or five treatments a year by a specialist at a cost of $11,000 each.

For the first year of the lockout, Yeakel received unemployment benefits, which enabled him to stay home and take care of his wife and son. But the benefits stopped after a year and a short seven-week extension.

To make matters worse, Yeakel had hip replacement surgery and took three months to recuperate, also during a time without any income.

"That's when we were adopted," said Yeakel, who would have had 20 years at Staley this September. "I still can't work because of my leg, and Adopt-a-Family has helped us to keep up our insurance. It just helped us tremendously."

In the Adopt-a-Family program, which began two years ago, unions or other organizations commit to contribute from $100 to $600 a month. The adopted family is determined according to need by a committee of the local, and each family is given $600 a month for basic living expenses.

The AFL-CIO and its affiliated unions have donated about $130,000 to help workers on strike or locked out at three Decatur, Ill., plants — Staley, Caterpillar and Bridgestone/Firestone. The UAW is providing for its members on strike at Caterpillar with $300 a month in strike pay. The Steelworkers are providing for members, formerly with the Rubber Workers, who are still out of work at Bridgestone/Firestone around the country.

"We're also strongly encouraging individual donations," said Barrie Williams, who heads the program for UPIU Local 7837. "We pool those contributions to meet the $600 a month."

A key aspect of the program is communication between the adopted family and its benefactor. The families update the contributors on the status of the lockout and carry the message of solidarity and struggle to union meetings and other events to keep the pressure on Staley.

The 760 Staley employees, formerly Allied Industrial Workers before merging with UPIU, were locked out when the union refused Staley's demands that workers agree to unlimited subcontracting, the loss of several hundred bargaining unit jobs, 12-hour rotating shifts with no premium pay and the gutting of seniority protections.

The workers rejected the company's latest proposal after the union negotiating committee and executive board condemned Staley for continuing to demand the right to unlimited subcontracting as well as the 12-hour rotating shifts.

"Our families have endured many hardships, but our members are not willing to accept an inferior proposal," said Local 7837 President David Watts.

"Our job right now is to ensure that the living expenses of our locked-out families are covered so we may continue to engage in the fight that will win us a contract," he said.

For more information on Adopt-a-Family, call Barrie Williams at 217/872-2209. Donations should be made payable to Adopt-a-Family Program; c/o UPIU Local 7837; 3080-B Kandy Lane; Decatur, Ill. 62526.



Joseph Garvin

Some 1,500 unionists march July 18 outside a Philadelphia Holiday Inn partly owned by former Eagles quarterback Ron Jaworski. They were protesting the beating of a business agent for the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees, who have picketed the hotel since 70 members were fired in 1993 and replaced by non-union workers. After the rally, Jaworski agreed to open rehiring talks.

Unity watchword as UTU delegates elect new chief

By David Kameras
Chicago

Offering a "blueprint for a new beginning," Charles Little was elected president of the United Transportation Union during the union's seventh quadrennial convention July 17-21.

Little, currently the union's secretary-treasurer, will take over the helm Jan. 1 from incumbent G. Thomas DuBose, who was defeated, 353-293. A third candidate, Vice President Cliff Bryant, received 37 votes.

Many officers and candidates referred to the possibility of merger with other rail unions in order to be stronger and better serve their union's membership.

"It is no secret that the UTU stands at a critical juncture in our history," Little said, pledging he will be "open to all compatible unions and will explore and encourage mergers" — but not at the expense of services provided to members.

"Rail labor must stand united from this day forward," said Mac Fleming, president of the Maintenance of Way Employees. "We who lead the unions must remember what Brother Eugene Debs said a century ago: 'An injury to one is an injury to all.'"

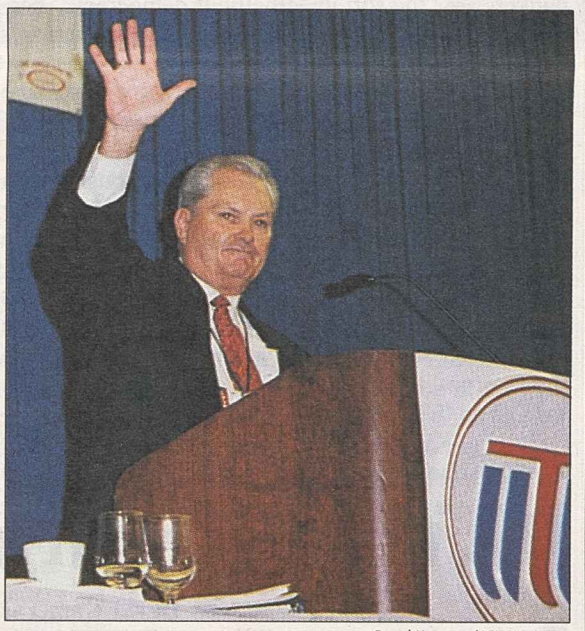
"With the government acting in so many ways like the servants of wealth, rail labor must stop fighting each other and start to fight the railroads," he said.

"When you fight in solidarity, you are doing everything right and enhance your chances of victory," added AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue.

"Our America has become a place that is not worker-friendly," he said. "Our national values seem to place greater emphasis on cost-cutting and increasing stockholder profits than on creating decent jobs in which people can take pride and with which they can raise families in decency."

"It is the renewed energy and dedication of men and women of this movement that will make the difference," Donahue said. In the face of a broad array of challenges facing UTU and all of rail labor, "the AFL-CIO is with you every step of the way."

In his report on the state of the union, DuBose spoke of the members' desire for unification that led to the formation of the UTU more than 25 years ago.



David Kameras/AFL-CIO News

New UTU President Charles Little acknowledges cheers from delegates.

"Unification means working together toward common goals, and together seeking common solutions," he said. "With that in mind, I would have to say we have been uncommonly successful."

As evidence of the union's strength, DuBose pointed to victories at Soo Line, Springfield Terminal, Chicago Pacific, Conrail, Long Island Rail Road and 80 percent of UTU's representation elections, as well as unification of U.S. and Canadian members under one constitution.

Delegates amended the union's constitution to create an association of state legislative directors; to impose sanctions of $1,000 plus $2 for every $1 received in compensation on members who cross authorized picket lines; and to increase strike benefits from $15 to $50 per day, up to $600 per month.

Also elected were Roger Griffeth as secretary-treasurer; James "Brokenrail" Brunkenhoefer as U.S. legislative director; T.S. Secord as Canadian legislative director; and Cliff Bryant, Pete Patsouras, Paul Thompson, J.L. Easley, Larry Davis, B.R. Wigent, A.L. Smith, L.H. Olson, R.L. Marceau, A.M. Lankford, R.W. Earley, R.D. Snyder, B.J. McNelis and J.M. Hone as vice presidents.

IATSE taps Short, changes its name

Miami Beach

Delegates to the Theatrical Stage Employees' 62nd biennial convention elected President Thomas C. Short to his first full term, re-elected Secretary-Treasurer Michael W. Proscia and paid tribute to its late president, Alfred W. DiTolla, who died last year.

The convention also changed the union's name to reflect the changing times. IATSE becomes the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Moving Picture Technicians, Artists and Allied Crafts of the United States and Canada, updating the former Moving Picture Machine Operators to correspond with developing technology.

Also approved was a motion to lengthen the interval between conventions from two years to three years. One other constitutional change involved film production locals, which now are required to contact the international union prior to negotiating a contract with a producer.

Increasing the linkages between workers and their unions was a key subject of AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue's address to the delegates.

"We need to reach out to each and every rank-and-file member. We have to educate and activate all of our members — and this is your job," Donahue said. "There are simply too many trade unionists, especially among our newer and younger members, who have little contact with their unions and little understanding of what unionism is all about.

"We haven't educated them about the real linkage between their active participation in the union's political work and activities and their political and economic well-being."

The convention honored DiTolla by presenting the Retired Officer's Plaque to his widow, Kathleen, and also with a special tribute during an interfaith memorial service in honor of all deceased IATSE members.

In other elections, Thomas Riley was chosen to replace Nels Hansen as one of three trustees of the international, and the Canadian Caucus elected James Wood to replace retired Canadian Vice President Alan L. Cowley.

UNION NEWS

Food Lion probe sought

A coalition of labor and consumer groups called for an investigation of the Food Lion supermarket chain, alleging the grocer may have had prior knowledge of sanitary inspections of its stores last year.

Consumers United with Employees asked the inspector general of the Department of Health and Human Services, the Food and Drug Administration and the attorneys general from Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida and Tennessee to investigate the charges.

Robert Harbrant, president of the AFL-CIO Food and Allied Service Trades Department, said Food Lion employees testified in depositions that the grocer knew which 63 stores were going to be inspected by the Food and Drug Administration inspections in six states between August 1993 and March 1994, and prepared accordingly.

"The inspections were supposed to be random," Harbrant said.

Maldives may lose GSP status

President Clinton has been advised to suspend preferred trading status for Maldives because of the Indian Ocean nation's dismal record on worker rights.

"After a two-year review, I have concluded that Maldives is not prepared currently to protect internationally recognized worker rights adequately, especially the right to organize and bargain collectively," said U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor.

Worker rights are among the criteria with which developing countries must conform in order to remain eligible for duty-free export benefits under the Generalized System of Preferences.

Rules protect service jobs

The Labor Department is taking steps to put in place a presidential executive order aimed at protecting workers from job losses when a government agency changes service contracts.

President Clinton issued Executive Order 12933, the Nondisplacement of Qualified Workers Under Certain Contracts, last October. The order requires that a successor contractor retain employees of the previous contractor, giving them the right of first refusal to jobs for which they are qualified. It covers building service contracts for public buildings.

In proposed rules published in the Federal Register, the DoL clarifies that the executive order does not require that successor contractors perform a contract with the same number of employees as the predecessor. It also says that the successor contractor has the discretion to determine which employees will be offered a right of first refusal.

Coalition targets McDonald's

The Campaign for an America That Works granted its latest "Hogs of the Month Award" to McDonald's for receiving millions of taxpayer dollars to advertise overseas.

"Congress should stop filling Big Macs with special interest pork," Teamsters President Ron Carey told reporters at a July 10 press conference.

Congress is considering legislation in the next few weeks to end the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Market Promotion Program, which since 1986 has given more than $1 billion to major corporations, including McDonald's, for advertising overseas.

The campaign was initiated by the IBT, Public Citizen, Citizen Action, Friends of the Earth, ACORN, Clean Water Action, National Family Farm Coalition, the U.S. Students Association and Jobs with Justice.

ILO looks at glass ceiling

Members of the AFL-CIO Department for Professional Employees Committee on Salaried and Professional Women met with Hedva Sarfati, an official of the International Labor Office in Geneva, to discuss how women can break through the glass ceiling.

Sarfati, chief of the ILO's Salaried Employees and Professional Workers branch, came to the United States to gather information about approaches to ensuring equality of opportunity for white-collar women. The ILO will convene a meeting with labor, business and governments to evaluate the progress made in recent years and to discuss alternative means to increase upward mobility and career opportunities.

Kirkland engineered changes

Continued from Page 1

bership of the American Federation of Labor in half.

When Reagan was elected, Kirkland responded immediately. He called Reagan's economic plans a "high-risk gamble with the lives of working people" and became the point person of dissent at a time Democratic congressional leaders were saying they had never seen a president quite so popular as Reagan.

To punctuate his point, Kirkland declared Sept. 19, 1981, as Solidarity Day and more than 400,000 unionists and their allies marched on Washington, at that time the largest political demonstration ever held in the capital.

A month before, Reagan fired all the air traffic controllers who struck. PATCO is now regarded as a linchpin in the ongoing U.S. assault on workers and their unions. But it also marked a turning point for workers in the airline industry, whose unions were to respond to the Eastern strike and other subsequent crises quite differently than in 1981, when they didn't support the controllers or couldn't agree with each other on a response.

Also within months after Kirkland was elected AFL-CIO president, Polish shipyard workers in Gdansk went on strike. Kirkland played a central role there, too, in events that literally changed the world.

The Polish government bargained with the fledgling union Solidarnosc in mid-1980, but imposed martial law in December 1981. Kirkland provided the help requested by Solidarnosc and its leader Lech Walesa through every conceivable channel, while constantly prodding the Reagan administration to quit extending credits to the Jaruzelski regime.

Before Solidarnosc, persistent federation efforts to support free, democratic trade unions spanned the globe, but had particular focus on South Africa, Chile and other nations of notorious oppression. In those and other efforts, Kirkland followed some basic rules: Support should fit what the workers themselves ask for, and always be aware that the developed world's bankers are "the soft underbelly of democracy," perfectly willing to fund oppressors as they did Jaruzelski.

Kirkland credited the idea for Solidarity Day to the regional conferences he inaugurated in the spring of 1981, when he and Donahue began the series of sessions with trade unionists around the country with the primary theme of, "What's on your mind?" He has kept those sessions going in varying forms in the 15 years since.

The most recent AFL-CIO regional conferences featured descriptions of the federation's tie-in to the information superhighway via its own web page on the Internet, which follows several successful years for LaborNET, designed for union members.

Earlier, Kirkland launched the Labor Institute of Public Affairs and developed other devices to keep the federation's communications current.

Exploration of new ways to strengthen other AFL-CIO methods also began early in Kirkland's time as president when he created the Committee on the Evolution of Work. After a start-up demographic study on the future of work, the committee in 1985 issued the landmark report, "The Changing Situation of Workers and Their Unions."

That study, hailed as a "remarkable document" because of its candor about labor's trials and troubles, cited 23 concrete steps to improving AFL-CIO structures and methods. One, opening up AFL-CIO leadership ranks to women and minorities, had already been started in 1980 when Kirkland changed the rule that a union could have only one council seat, allowing the first woman to be elected to the Executive Council in 1980, and the first African-American woman in 1981.

When Kirkland took over in 1979, it seemed unlikely — if not inconceivable — that an affiliated union would ever voluntarily forgo an organizing target because another union had a better chance, agree to hold off on endorsing presidential candidates during the primaries to see if all AFL-CIO unions could reach a consensus, or allow other unions to share its bargaining goals and review its methods.

Yet all that happened to one degree or another over the next 16 years in the form of Article XXI, the endorsement of Walter Mondale and Bill Clinton before their party conventions, and the cases brought to the Strategic Approaches Committee.

Other changes in the AFL-CIO directly traceable to the Committee on the Evolution of Work are the Union Privilege benefits available through group purchasing; associate membership programs in a variety of states, most notably California; and the Organizing Institute, which trains new organizers and improves the movement's overall organizing expertise.

The Kirkland years also saw creation of Legislative Action Committees, the first sustained grass-roots lobbying effort; creation of the April 28 Workers Memorial Day to advance job safety and health; and promotion of the AFL-CIO pension investment program, which pushed the Housing Investment Trust/Building Investment Trust over the $1 billion mark.

Kirkland, 73, a native of Camden, S.C., graduated from the Merchant Marine Academy in 1942, when he joined the Masters, Mates and Pilots, and went on to serve as a deck officer throughout World War II. After the war, he graduated from the Georgetown University school of foreign service before joining the AFL research staff in 1948.

He moved on to the Social Security Department, where he became labor's expert on pensions and health care, served briefly on the staff of the Operating Engineers in the 1950s and became executive assistant to Meany in 1961.

ILA to block non-union incursions

By David Kameras

The Longshoremen are willing to help their union employers compete with the encroachment of non-union companies — but not at the expense of their members.

"We can no longer stand idly by and let the non-union sector get bigger and bigger," said John Bowers, who was re-elected president during the ILA's quadrennial convention in Orlando, Fla., July 17-20. "We're willing to negotiate, but we're not willing to sell out," he declared.

Although the current master agreement covering workers on the East and Gulf Coasts doesn't expire until October 1996, Bowers anticipates that formal negotiations will begin a year earlier.

A recent reversal by a federal appeals court of a ruling by the National Labor Relations Board calling collaboration between the ILA and Japanese longshoremen a secondary boycott was "a great decision," Bowers said. The Japanese workers had refused to unload ships that had used non-union labor in two Florida ports.

Bowers also joined Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's President Brian McWilliams in calling for a national dredging policy, pledging $1 million to underwrite a study of the issue. Both union leaders said they would be willing to shut down the various coasts in order to draw attention to the fact that environmental concerns have delayed much-needed port improvements.

The ILA voiced opposition to congressional proposals to eliminate the Federal Maritime Commission, fearing that the result could be a loss of waterfront jobs and a shift in shipping to non-union facilities.

"This union, like every other trade union in the country, is having some tough times," noted AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue. "Some of the employers you're up against are hiring non-union workers for the break-bulk cargoes. You have seen too many well-paying jobs 'downsized' out of existence. And, this is a tough year for contract negotiations.

"We have some serious work to do," Donahue said. "We have to strengthen our unions and we have to strengthen the AFL-CIO, and strengthen its solidarity and make it an even more effective instrument for the achievement of workers' rights and decent standards of work and of life."

Other speakers at the convention included Seafarers President Michael Sacco; Joel E. Bem, president, Marine Engineers District 1; Michael McKay, president, American Maritime Officers; Edward J. Malloy, president, New York Building and Construction Trades Council; Norman Hill, president, A. Philip Randolph Institute; Harry Brown, president, Central Florida AFL-CIO; Jimmy Herman, president emeritus, ILWU; Timothy Brown, president of ILA's Masters, Mates and Pilots; David Cockroft, general secretary, International Transport Workers Federation; House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.); Reps. Robert Menendez (D-N.J.) and Donald Payne (D-N.J.); and Joan Yim, U.S. deputy maritime administrator.

BARGAINING

LIUNA gains first contract

Six months after winning a representation election, the Laborers gained a first contract for workers at Sanderson Farms' Hazelhurst, Miss., chicken plant.

About 500 members of LIUNA Local 693 are covered by the four-year agreement, which was ratified July 15.

The contract calls for raises of 4.5 percent to 5 percent in the first year and 3 percent in each of the remaining three years. After the first increase, wages will range from $6.90 an hour to $11.70. The contract also gives employees a new grievance procedure, a steward system, dues check-off and union security clauses, and includes a no-strike/no-lockout provision.

LIUNA and the company also have begun negotiations for an initial contract at Sanderson's Collins, Miss., plant, which employs 1,300 workers. Another 650 workers at the company's Hammond, La., plant are represented by the Food and Commercial Workers.

Unions, Electric Boat agree

Workers at Electric Boat ratified a new three-year agreement that raises wages and offers a retirement incentive package designed to reduce the work force by two-thirds.

The agreement gives 6,400 members of the Metal Trades Council of New England raises of 2 percent in each of 1996 and 1997, and 2.5 percent in 1998. Employees also will receive signing bonuses of $1,500.

The contract also allows the Groton, Conn., company to offer retirement incentives for workers age 55 and older with at least 10 years seniority.

Iron Workers OK contracts

Iron Workers in Connecticut and New Jersey reached agreements with contractors that raise wages and benefits.

Under the agreement between Iron Workers Local 15 in Hartford, Local 242 in New Haven and the Associated General Contractors of Connecticut, workers statewide will receive increases totaling $1.55 over three years. The increases of 55 cents in the first year and 50 cents in each of the other two years will be divided among wages, pensions and health care benefits under a formula in the contract. The agreement covers 1,200 workers.

A separate agreement between Iron Workers Local 350 and Associated General Contractors of New Jersey will raise wages and benefits by $1.95 over two years.

HERE gains in Hawaii

Some 5,000 employees of seven Hawaii hotels will receive a 10 percent pay raise over the next three years under a contract ratified by members of Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Local 5.

The five-year master agreement provides wage adjustments of 4 percent in the first year and 3 percent each of the next two years. The parties agreed to reopen wage talks in 1998 for the final two years. Under the previous pact, average wages were $12.45.

The agreement maintains free health care, increases pension benefits, streamlines the grievance and arbitration systems and sets up a joint committee to study workloads and scheduling.

The hotels, represented by the Hawaii Hotel Council, are the Hyatt Regency Waikiki, Sheraton Princess Kaiulani, Sheraton Moana Surf Rider, Sheraton Royal Hawaiian, Sheraton Waikiki, Hilton Hawaiian Village and the Ilikai Hotel.

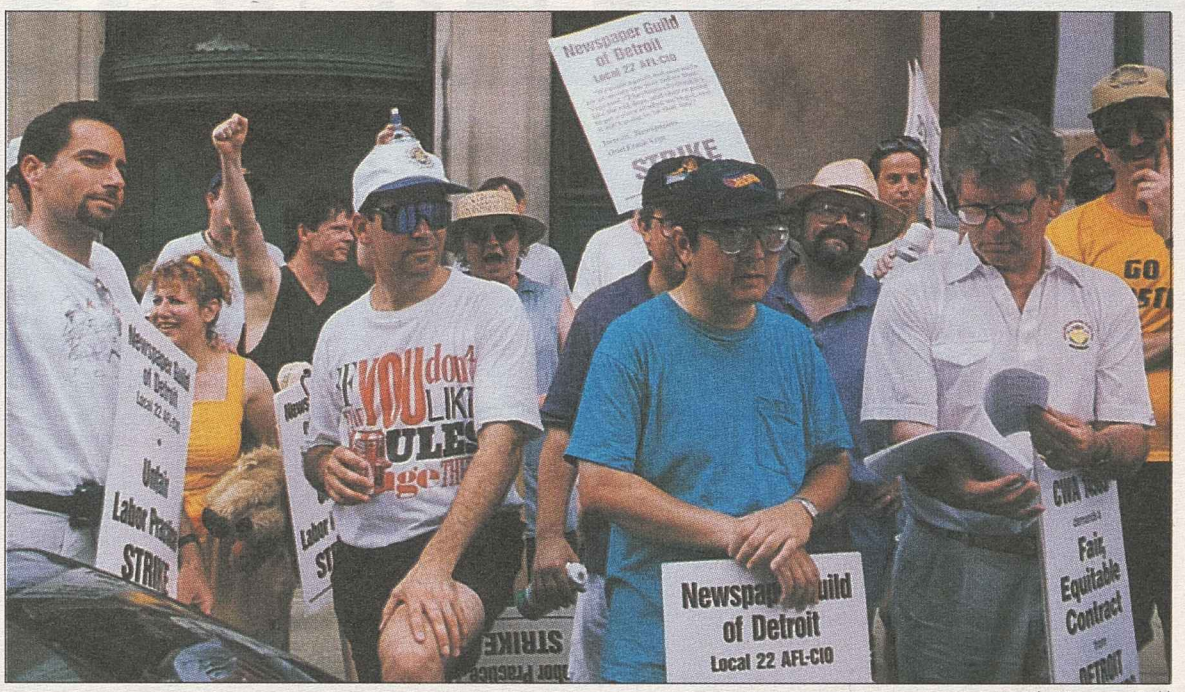
BCT, Entenmann's agree

Some 1,240 members of Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers Local 3 will receive a 65-cents-per-hour raise beginning next year under a new contract with Entenmann's Inc.

The contract, ratified May 11, mainly covers production and maintenance workers at the company's Long Island, N.Y., plant, as well as 150 clerks and other workers at nine Entenmann's retail stores in three states. Entenmann's is a division of Kraft Foods.

Under the three-year agreement, workers will receive a $400 cash signing bonus in the first year, followed by a 30-cent raise in the second year and 35 cents in the third year. The current average hourly wage is $14.72.

The pact also raises retirement benefits by $100 a month over the term and maintains current health benefits for active workers.



The Newspaper Guild

Striking workers rally outside the Detroit Free Press July 17 as six unions pressed for a fair contract.

Detroit is a no-newspaper town

Advertisers and readers support striking workers

By James B. Parks

Community support is mushrooming and solidarity remains high as the Detroit newspaper strike entered its third week with no progress at the bargaining table.

The six unions represented by the Metropolitan Council of Newspaper Unions met briefly with management of the Detroit News and Detroit Free Press July 25. No more meetings are scheduled.

"There was no movement on their part," said campaign coordinator George Curtin. "They came in and said you have our last offer, there's no more to say. I have no idea why that meeting even took place.

"The issue all along has been management's failure to bargain. We made every effort to jump-start the talks," Curtin said. The unions have filed unfair labor practice charges with the National Labor Relations Board for the papers' failure to bargain in good faith.

Meanwhile, the unions' campaign against the newspapers is taking its toll. About 90 percent of the papers' advertisers have dropped out, including 45 auto dealers. That leaves only four auto dealers and a few small local businesses in Detroit, Curtin said.

Despite management claims, circulation of the two papers, now a scab-produced combined edition, has dropped to about 25 percent of pre-strike totals.

"They can't get it to readers," Curtin said. The companies have been reduced to having hired security goons from three well-known union busting firms — Vance, Huffmaster and Nationwide — deliver the papers. "They just throw it willy-nilly anywhere," Curtin said.

In a tremendous outpouring of community support, some 200,000 readers have canceled their subscriptions, the union said. Most store owners no longer carry the papers and the unions plan to leaflet those that do along with companies that still advertise, Curtin said.

Curtin and field representative Shavonne Perpena were assigned by the AFL-CIO Department of Organization and Field Services in response to the unions' request for assistance. Michael Szpak, the department's religious coordinator, is lining up support from local religious leaders.

The federation's Strategic Approaches Committee will meet to discuss ways of expanding aid to the strikers during the Aug. 1-2 Executive Council meeting in Chicago.

Thousands of people rallied July 17 outside the News' downtown Detroit headquarters, where they heard from Mine Workers President Richard L. Trumka, chairman of the Strategic Approaches Committee, and Presidents James J. Norton of the Graphic Communications Union and Charles Dale of The Newspaper Guild.

Union solidarity has been strong. Two unions that already had reached agreements with the papers, the Machinists and Mechanics, announced they would honor the picket lines even though company lawyers threatened to replace them. The UAW wrote advertisers urging a boycott of the papers and the Michigan AFT asked its members to join the subscriber campaign.

To support the workers, area labor leaders formed a blue ribbon committee headed by UAW President Stephen P. Yokich and Edgar A. Scribner, president of the Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO.

Some 2,600 employees walked out July 13 after negotiations failed to produce agreement on a new contract. Contracts expired April 30 at the News, Free Press and the jointly-owned Detroit Newspaper Agency, which operates the two papers' non-editorial activities. The DNA refused to extend the contracts past July 2, even though talks resumed briefly July 9.

The papers are demanding 200 jobs cut, givebacks on health care, restrictions on the grievance procedure, shifting of some full-time jobs to part time with no benefits and elimination of 1,600 news carriers.

When the papers were losing money three years ago, workers agreed to give up pay raises and 350 jobs. Last year, the newspapers made $55 million.

Besides TNG and two Teamsters locals, the unions represented by the council include two GCIU locals and the Communications Workers.

UAW, USWA, IAM plan a new union

Continued from Page 1

decline in buying power for wage earners. To those members of the corporate community who might prefer a 'union-free' environment, it offers a choice of strong cooperation or strong opposition."

The three presidents signed a unity declaration that stated, "our enduring vision of a world of dignity, security and prosperity for the many — not just the few — requires nothing less than we create a new union for a new era."

The executive boards of the three unions unanimously approved the idea of unity July 27. The unification will take place gradually over the next five years. That will give each union time to make the necessary constitutional and internal changes to ease the transition to the new union. During that time, key issues such as structure, name and officers will be ironed out.

Once details of the unification are worked out, all three unions will vote in separate conventions on the plan. The three presidents would not predict how long that would take.

Under the proposed unification, the unions will, as soon as possible, begin to coordinate their member services activities in such areas as legislation, organizing, collective bargaining, legal affairs, communications, education and training.

Discussions on the new union have been going on for several years, Yokich said. The unions have a history of working together on coordinated bargaining in the auto, aerospace and can industries, which makes the unification a natural move, he said.

The proposed unification could bring immediate added strength to workers involved in the high-profile disputes such as the Rubber Workers strike at Bridgestone/Firestone.

DATA

The Income Gap

Distribution of real income in 13 industrialized nations

	Real income (10th percentile in U.S. = 100)	Income Ratio	
	10th	*90th*	*90th/10th*
United States	100	594	5.94
Italy	88	356	4.05
Canada	130	524	4.03
Australia	103	412	4.00
United Kingdom	99	377	3.81
France	118	412	3.49
Switzerland	164	564	3.44
West Germany	124	371	2.99
Norway	135	397	2.94
Austria	128	370	2.89
The Netherlands	99	282	2.85
Sweden	105	285	2.71
Finland	127	330	2.60

Source: Luxembourg Income Study (Mid-1980s)

The gap between the rich and the poor in the United States is much greater than in any other industrialized country, according to a Luxembourg group that pulled together the latest available data. This graph shows the ratio in after-tax real incomes between families in the lowest 10th percentile of incomes and at the highest (90th percentile). During the mid-1980s, a U.S. family in the 90th percentile made nearly six times that of a family at the 10th percentile, a rate economists say has widened dramatically in the past decade.

Real Earnings

June	+1.2 percent
From June '94	-0.6 percent

Consumer Prices (CPI-W)

June	+0.1 percent
June '94-June '95	+3.1 percent

Compensation Costs

July '94-June '95	+2.9 percent

Merchandise Trade Deficit

May	$13.5 billion
April	$12.2 billion

AFL-CIO NEWSGRAFIC

Earnings up, but trend is down

Economic divide creating a 'two-tier society'

By David Kameras

Workers went to the bank breathing a little easier in June, as real average weekly earnings rose 1.2 percent. But real earnings remained 0.6 percent below the inflation-adjusted figure a year ago.

In fact, overall compensation for the year was the lowest since 1981, according to figures measuring employer costs for both pay and benefits. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported July 25 that compensation costs have risen a paltry 2.9 percent over the last year, trailing the rate of inflation. For workers in private industry, compensation rose 2.8 percent.

The increase in real earnings for June was driven by a 0.9 percent increase in average weekly hours and a 0.4 percent increase in average weekly earnings, which were $393.06, compared with $383.84 a year ago.

The compensation cost data, Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich told the House Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee, points to the risk that "eventually we'll end up in a two-tier society" — an alarm sounded last year by the Dunlop Commission.

Union workers saw compensation increases of 2.3 percent, compared with 2.9 percent for non-union workers — reflecting the higher level of pay and benefits that union workers receive. But wage settlements for the second quarter also were disappointing, with a first-year average of 2.1 percent, and 2.2 percent over the contract term. They replaced settlements that paid 3.1 percent and 3 percent, respectively.

"When compared to the cost of living, these are small settlements," observed AFL-CIO economist John Zalusky. "The cost of living increased 3.1 percent over the previous year. Productivity during the second quarter was up 1.4 percent from a year earlier. This pattern has plateaued for two years at this sorry state."

Average hourly compensation in March for non-union workers in private industry was $16.26, still far below the $22.40 earned by organized labor.

The problem of declining real earnings was demonstrated in a recent study by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, which showed that low-wage workers with children have a much tougher time making ends meet than they did 18 years ago.

In 1977, 7.7 percent of families headed by a worker were below the poverty line, a proportion that rose to 11.4 percent by 1993. Some 22 million people, more than half of America's poor, live in households where somebody works.

According to the Labor Department, the number of America's working poor reached 8.2 million in 1993. Of that figure, 4.7 million were working full time most of the year.

In the face of ongoing increases in productivity and corporate profits, "we now are the most unequal of any industrialized nation in terms of distribution of income," said Reich.

"If the Republicans' extremist, anti-economic agenda holds sway, and if more is not done to protect, preserve and defend our shrinking middle class, we may not have one in 20 or 30 years," added House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.).

AFL-CIO economist Anne Draper estimates that the poverty line for an urban family of four in June was $15,580, requiring an hourly equivalent of $7.49 and pointing up the need to increase the $4.25 minimum wage.

For older workers, limited opportunities to work and to put something aside for retirement can be especially distressing, as the divide between haves and have-nots continues to widen.

A new study by the RAND Corp. of 1993 data reveals that the wealthiest 10 percent of white Americans approaching retirement, at $944,046 per household, had 10 times the assets of those in the bottom 10 percent. For African-Americans aged 51 to 61, the range was $495,851 to $26,285.

The asset value of future pension and Social Security payments, which make up a large portion of wealth at the lower end of the scale, were included in the study. Without those future payments, the gap would have registered much wider.

Just as startling, when home equity was excluded, the median white household was left with $18,000 in personal wealth. For African-American and Hispanic couples, liquid assets were less than $500.

Given the declines in pension coverage and Social Security benefits, "loud alarm bells are ringing for the future," said James P. Smith, the study's author. Among lower-income households, Social Security "is basically the only wealth they have."

The BLS reports that the number of men aged 55 to 64 in the work force was 64.8 percent in 1994, down from 87.3 percent in 1949.

Changes to the cost of living for the month remained moderate, with the Consumer Price Index (CPI-W) edging up 0.1 percent, the smallest increase this year.

Increases in consumer prices were posted in food (0.1 percent, including 9.7 percent for fruits and vegetables and 12.5 percent for non-alcoholic beverages); shelter (0.2 percent); gas and electric charges (0.4 percent); fuel oil (0.7 percent); gasoline (0.4 percent); new vehicles (0.2 percent); public transportation fares (3.6 percent); and medical care (0.3 percent). Prices dropped for clothing (0.1 percent); used cars (1 percent, still 12.4 percent higher than a year ago); auto finance charges and other private transportation services (0.3 percent); and household furnishings and operations (0.2 percent).

Finished goods, which are a good predictor of future consumer price actions, actually dropped 0.1 percent in June after a standstill in May, indicating that the inflation pattern will continue in a low range, said Rudy Oswald, the AFL-CIO's chief economist.

Growing trade deficit means loss of more U.S. jobs

The U.S. trade imbalance in goods worsened again in May, growing from $12.2 billion to $13.5 billion.

The cumulative deficit for the year was $61.4 billion, a substantial increase over the $47.7 billion recorded during the first five months of 1994.

"May's near-record merchandise trade deficit provides further evidence that the inequitable international trading system has become a major obstacle to domestic economic growth," said Mark Anderson, director of the AFL-CIO Task Force on Trade. "Its impact on the jobs and wages of American workers is severe."

The trade deficit in goods with Mexico scored $1.6 billion in May, bringing the red ink to $6.9 billion since the first of the year. During the same period in 1994, the United States enjoyed a surplus of $885 million.

In contrast, Mexico had a global trade surplus of $866 million in May, reaping the reward of a devalued peso that has made goods produced in Mexico far cheaper. In the first five months of 1995, Mexico's trade surplus was $2.2 billion, compared with a $7.73 billion deficit in the same period of 1994.

A University of Maryland study estimates that the United States will lose a net total of 223,220 jobs this year to Mexico, where 12 workers can be hired for the average cost of one U.S. worker. Electrical machinery, transportation equipment and general machinery have been particularly hard hit.

Workers at Ford Motor Co.'s LaMosa plant in Nuevo Laredo held a wildcat strike July 20 that resulted in a 30 percent increase in their wages. However, that still left them at $44 per week, well below the $75 they earned before the peso was devalued.

In letters to Ford President and CEO Alex Trotman and Mexican Labor Secretary Santiago Onate, Teamsters President Ron Carey urged that steps be taken to avoid a repeat of the police violence that was inflicted on workers at a Sony plant there last year. "Ford already has a sorry history of violating workers' rights at other plants in Mexico," he said.

The trade deficit in goods also worsened dramatically with Western Europe, moving from $418 million to $960 million. In the case of the European Union countries alone, it deteriorated from $44 million to $896 million. The cumulative deficit with Germany, Europe's economic powerhouse, is $1 billion greater than a year ago.

The merchandise trade deficit with Japan improved somewhat, going from $5.9 billion to $5.5 billion. But that was offset by the deficit with China, which widened from $2.3 billion to $2.8 billion. Overall, the United States bought $9.7 billion more from Pacific Rim countries than it sold, up from $8.5 billion in April.

Among manufactured goods, deficits were posted in cars and trucks ($23.6 billion), clothing and footwear ($16.7 billion), data processing and office machinery ($9.1 billion), electrical machinery ($7.4 billion), telecommunications equipment ($5.9 billion), iron and steel products ($3.9 billion), toys and sporting goods ($2.5 billion), furniture ($2.2 billion) and paper and paperboard ($0.9 billion).

Exports outpaced imports in airplanes and parts ($7.8 billion), general and specialized machinery ($0.7 billion) and power generating equipment ($0.1 billion).

May's trade deficit in goods and services combined was a seasonally adjusted $11.4 billion, largely unchanged from April. However, the year-to-date total was $52.9 billion, up sharply from the $41 billion marking the same period in record-breaking 1994.

— David Kameras

ORGANIZING

Poultry workers vote LIUNA

Workers at Case Farms Poultry in Morganton, N.C., voted 238-183 for representation by the Laborers. More than 500 employees, including many recent immigrants from Mexico and Guatemala, were eligible to vote in the election.

The drive began when workers walked off their jobs over the oppressive heat in the plant and the speed of the processing line.

To assist poultry workers in the South, LIUNA is working with various community groups, including the National Rainbow Coalition.

Hanover votes for UFCW

The anti-union campaign orchestrated by the Hanover Foods processing plant in Clayton, Del., did not deter workers from voting by a three-to-one margin for representation with the Food and Commercial Workers.

Employee concerns ranged from job safety and costly health insurance to seniority, job security and low wages.

The plant makes a variety of foods, including pizza toppings, processed fish, 11 different kinds of meatballs and numerous vegetable products.

IUE wins at Surfaces

Determined not to let management's false promises prevail a second time, workers at Surfaces Division of Hilite Industries in the Dallas area voted 96-64 to be represented by the Electronic Workers.

During the 1993 election campaign, management begged for another chance and promised the employees that they would correct problems and treat all workers fairly. But after nearly two years and no substantial improvements in working conditions, the workers contacted IUE.

"The workers were just tired of abuse from management and the company did not keep its promises," said Jaime Martinez, who directed the campaign.

NYC Fire Fighters come home

The Uniformed Firefighters Association of New York (UFA) voted to rejoin the Fire Fighters.

"I am extremely pleased by this decision of the rank-and-file fire fighters of New York," said Alfred K. Whitehead, president of IAFF. "This further solidifies the IAFF as the near-unanimous choice of representation for professional fire fighters in the United States and Canada."

With more than 8,500 members, the former IAFF Local 94 was one of the charter unions that founded the IAFF in 1918. "The UFA is a significant group with a long history of partnership with the international and now that history will be continued," said Whitehead.

RESOURCES

Stand UP campaign adds new materials

A glitzy new leaflet and a baseball cap are the newest items available from the AFL-CIO campaign to Stand UP for America's Working Families.

The leaflet is part of the core package of materials free to union groups. That basic package consists of 50 bumper strips, 10 rally signs, 100 lapel stickers and 25 brochures. The flier has with it a return card with which union members can add their name to the growing list of AFL-CIO activists taking part in the Stand UP campaign.

Stand UP
For America's Working Families
THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE AFL-CIO
LEADING THE FIGHT FOR AMERICA'S WORKING FAMILIES

The bill caps cost $5 each, or $4.50 on orders of 10 or more. T-shirts are $7 each or $6 each on orders of 11 or more and come in sizes Large, X-Large and XX-Large. Items in the core package also are available for bulk orders at a cost of 10 cents each for bumper strips, $1.50 each for picket signs and $4 for a roll of 100 lapel stickers.

Material can be ordered from the AFL-CIO Stand UP Campaign, Room 209, 815 16th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006. Phone 202/637-5041 or FAX 202/637-5058.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Bill Clause of the Government Employees presents his one-man play about late Mine Workers President John L. Lewis as part of the 17th annual Great Labor Arts Exchange Festival at the George Meany Center for Labor Studies. More than 100 unionists attended the festival, which uses the arts to promote social change.

NEWSMAKERS

Sumi Haru, a longtime board member of the Screen Actors Guild, was named acting president of the union. Haru replaces **Barry Gordon**, who resigned to run for Congress. Haru, a New Jersey-born Filipina American, is the first person of color to head SAG. She will serve until board elections are held in the fall.

Patrick J. O'Farrell retired July 28 as executive director of the African American Labor Center, the AFL-CIO's institute for Africa. O'Farrell was a research associate for the Steelworkers before joining the AALC staff in 1966. He became executive director in 1973. AFL-CIO President **Lane Kirkland** praised O'Farrell for carrying out "a very difficult and challenging assignment," noting that much of the credit for many of the constructive things that have happened in Africa "belongs to the AALC under Pat's leadership."

Gary R. Nebeker, who heads the Food and Commercial Workers International and Foreign Affairs Department, was elected president of the International Federation of Commercial, Clerical, Professional and Technical Employees (FIET). The trade secretariat links unionists employed in the service sectors — primarily banking, commerce, hair care, industry, insurance, security and health care — with their counterparts around the world. Nebeker is only the third American to head FIET in its 91-year history.

Catherine O'Reilly Collette, director of AFSCME's Women's Rights Department, was appointed to the newly created Violence Against Women Advisory Council. The council was established to promote greater awareness of violence against women.

Pamela Talkin, a Federal Labor Relations Authority member and former aide at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, will become deputy executive director of the U.S. Senate's Congressional Office of Compliance. The office will administer and enforce 11 labor and employment laws in the legislative branch.

More than 200 farm workers, staff and union members joined the family of the late **Cesar Chavez** to break ground for an open-air plaza and library complex being built around the grave site of the Farm Workers founder in Delano, Calif. The area will include a stage and amphitheater, a memorial courtyard and shrines. The library will house historical displays and serve as an education and training center.

Teamsters President **Ron Carey** will serve as grand marshal for this year's Labor Day parade in New York City. Carey was selected for his record as "a fearless reformer and defender of workers' rights."

Ken Hall was named as interim director of IBT's Parcel and Small Package Division. He will be responsible for carrying out the union's programs for 165,000 employees at United Parcel Service. Hall is president of Local 175 in Charleston, W.Va.

Family and friends of **Margaret (Peggy) Goodwin Rice**, a government union activist and first paid organizer of the Washington, D.C., local of AFSCME, will gather Aug. 27 in Rockville, Md., to remember her on the fifth anniversary of her death. For information, call William Rice at 301/229-6454.

Brothers **Moe** and **Henry Foner**, both retired union officials, will appear in "I'm Not Rappaport," a film adaptation of the Herb Gardner play. They appear in a scene about the 1909 garment workers' strike.

AWARDS

Members of AFGE Local 1882 at Fort McCoy, Wis., were selected for the 1994 Army Community of Excellence Award, a competition recognizing installations for innovative approaches to partnership. The winners won the title of the "best small community in the United States Army," and will receive the $500,000 grand prize.

AFGE's hip-hop jazzy video "AFGE and Me" received the second-place "Silver CINDY" award sponsored by the Association of Visual Communicators. The video shows images of government employees at work and highlights the diverse composition of the union's membership. "The future of our union rests on our ability to attract the next generation of workers," said AFGE President **John Sturdivant.**

The AFT announced four winners of the **Robert G. Porter** scholarships, named in honor of the union's late secretary-treasurer. Two of the scholarships were given to graduating high school seniors **Joel Morales, Jr**. of Corpus Christi, Texas, and **Mateo Jaramillo** of Salinas, Calif. **Nancy Nicholson,** a high school librarian from New York, and **Jacqueline D. Robertson**, a paraprofessional from Norfolk, Va., will use their awards to further their academic studies.

DEATHS

George L. P. Weaver, a former union official who served as assistant secretary of labor for international affairs during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, died of complications related to emphysema and asthma. He was 83.

Weaver began his career as a member of the United Transport Service Employees, a union of redcaps. Later, he was assistant to the secretary-treasurer and director of the civil rights committee of the CIO. After the CIO merged with the AFL, Weaver became the executive secretary of the federation's civil rights committee.

In 1958, he became assistant to the president of the Electronic Workers and director of the IUE political education program. He remained there until he joined the Labor Department during the Kennedy administration. Weaver also served as chairman and assistant to the president of the International Labor Organization. Survivors include his wife and two sisters.

Jenifor Klindt, a Democratic National Committee official and wife of AFL-CIO COPE Director Richard Walsh, died suddenly from a cerebral hemorrhage at age 49. Klindt joined the DNC in 1993. At the time of her death, she was working to elect Democrats to the nation's state legislatures.

Besides her husband, Klindt is survived by a son from her first marriage, a sister and two brothers.

— Compiled by Muriel H. Cooper



Sam Hughes

Organizing Institute intern Nancy Harvin makes a point during a home visit to a B.C. Rogers worker in Mississippi.

Organizing Institute on the job

Working at opposite ends of the country, AFL-CIO Organizing Institute interns recently set out to bring workers dignity and respect through a labor union.

Under the aegis of the Food and Commercial Workers in Mississippi and the Steelworkers in Minnesota, the interns applied the lessons learned in three days in the classroom to "Real Life 101."

The on-the-job training is one phase of the institute's training process. Participants first spend several days in class learning, among other things, how to do house calls, conduct union meetings, role play and write leaflets.

Then, the participants head out for a three-week internship in an active organizing campaign. The final stage is a three-month internship.

"The UFCW Workers' Voice Program is about letting workers gain a voice in the workplace — so the union naturally welcomes the opportunity to help new organizers find the voice that will help them in their chosen profession," UFCW President Doug Dority said.

"Workers need a union, and we want to assist anyone who has a real interest in helping workers to learn the skills and have the practical experience they need to be effective."

The interns are helping workers at the B.C. Rogers chicken-processing plant in McComb, Miss., to understand the impact of union membership and to gain a voice in the way their workplace is run. The workers currently are paid poorly, with no overtime pay or benefits, unsafe and unsanitary working conditions and abusive supervisors.

"I wanted a job that was fulfilling, where I can make a difference — not just be on a computer," said John Belizaire, 24, a graduate of the University of Massachusetts. He said in his experience people usually hear the negatives about unions — strikes and dues — but that through recruitment and training, the labor movement will seed an army of new supporters who can ensure that "people won't be ignorant about what the labor movement is all about."

Interns in Minnesota are part of the USWA's "quality, quantity and involvement" commitment to organizing.

The union plans to train 300 volunteer organizers over the next year and has committed $1 million to reach its goal. The USWA program also is part of the larger efforts of the federation's Organizing Institute.

"We have always been involved in the field-training segment of organizing," said Allison Porter, assistant director of the institute. "Now we are seeing more unions send their rank-and-file members through the sponsorship program and return to their communities to organize workers."

Some 55 USWA members already have been through the program, including Mike Griffin, who knew the pitfalls of organizing from a prior attempt at two local mines in Southeast Missouri.

"I didn't really know what I was doing or how to go about it," he said, "but I knew the workers would be better off if they had union representation.

"Before, I just talked to people about how a union could fix some of their job-related problems," said Griffin. "I knew you had to have a majority of the workers to sign cards, but I didn't know about house visits and in-plant committees and the other tools that organizers use."

"Working people need representation today more than ever, and our goal is to bring the benefits of unionism to as many as possible as quickly as possible," said David Foster of USWA District 33.

USWA volunteers organized 50 workers at TSE Inc., a group-home employer in Minneapolis. They had to put into action all the steps they had been taught in the classroom — getting authorization cards signed, developing in-plant committees, holding elections and winning.

"This is what we set out to do — bring the rank and file into the front line," Foster said. "We need a combination of staff organizers to provide planning strategy and training, but we also need the rank and file, for there is no better communicator to the non-union member. It's a winning combination."

The Organizing Institute welcomes everyone who wants to make a difference in workers' lives, such as Jim Carney, a vice president of an AFSCME local in Virginia, and Nancy Harvin, a staff member of the AFT.

"This experience has been incredible," said Carney, who worked with the UFCW in Mississippi. "It enables people to empower other workers through a teaching process. It gives experience, knowledge and expertise to change the situation in the United States with the labor movement."

Like Griffin, Harvin had been involved in an organizing campaign before going through the training.

"I have more of a sense of ownership in what I'm doing now than before," said Harvin, who also worked at the Rogers plant. "Before, I didn't really understand what my role was."

This story combines the reporting of Muriel H. Cooper of the AFL-CIO News and Lauren Asplin of the Food and Commercial Workers.



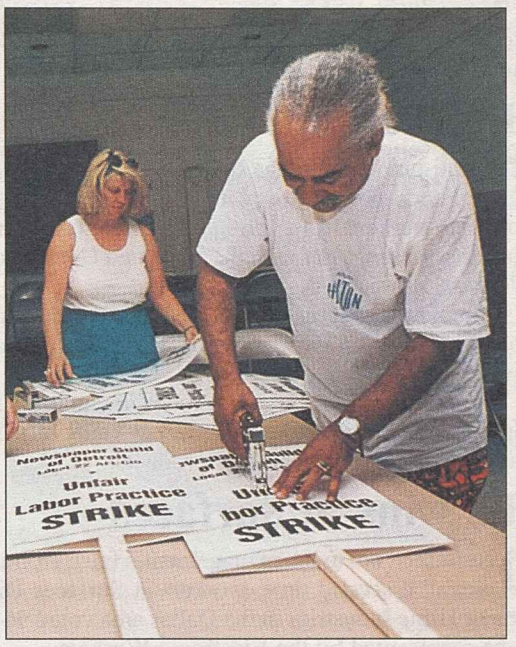
USWA photo

Volunteer organizers from the Steelworkers listen intently during a training session as part of the union's mission to recruit 300 workers to assist in organizing campaigns throughout the country.

AFL-CIO NEWS

VOLUME 40, NUMBER 16 JULY 31, 1995

INSIDE



The Newspaper Guild members assemble picket signs at the Teamsters hall as six unions strike the Detroit newspapers. **See story, Page 13.**

UNION NEWS

1 *Lane Kirkland era a period of change*

UNION NEWS

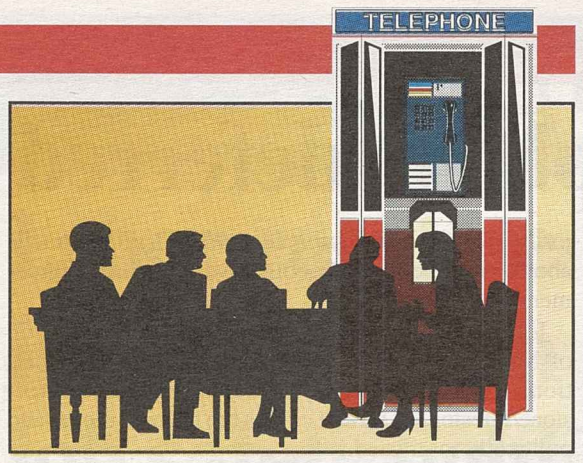
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UNION YES

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Baby Bell negotiations hung up on Bell Atlantic. **See UNION News, Page 9.**

AFL-CIO NEWS

VOLUME 40, NUMBER 17 AUGUST 14, 1995

President Donahue vows to 'propel change'

Easterling pioneers as first woman of labor

By Michael Byrne
Chicago

Tom Donahue was elected by the Executive Council to succeed Lane Kirkland as president of the AFL-CIO, and Barbara Easterling became the first woman to hold a top leadership post in the federation when she was elected to succeed Donahue as secretary-treasurer.

Donahue immediately posed an ambitious agenda for the council, targeting organizing, political and legislative action, strike support and institutional reform.

"I take office with firm resolve that as the world and the workplace are changing, so will we," Donahue said at the installation of officers. "We will not just adapt to change; we will propel change so that in the new workplace of the future, labor will be a proud, powerful and humanizing force for a better standard of life."

Easterling is a Polish coal miner's daughter from Ohio who rose through the ranks from telephone operator to secretary-treasurer of the Communications Workers.

"My friends, if anyone wants to see change — you're looking at it," she said to cheers at the installation ceremony.

Organizing fund approved

The council approved a series of Donahue recommendations, including:

- The creation of a new organizing fund, which could grow to $20 million over five years. Donahue proposed raising the money without per capita increases through a renegotiation of the Union Privilege MasterCard program, now in progress, and to apply the funds to multiunion organizing campaigns in specific industries.

Donahue also proposed increasing the budget for the federation's successful Organizing Institute in an effort to double the recruitment and training of new organizers, and referred both issues to the ad hoc committee on organizing, which will report to a council meeting set for Sept. 21 in Washington. **(See story, Page 5).**

- Expansion of the AFL-CIO Stand UP for America's Working Families communications and legislative action campaign, with advertising and grass-roots mobilization against the congressional assault on worker protections. **(See story below).**

Donahue named a new associate director of the

Continued on Page 7



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue congratulates Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling at a rally to celebrate the AFL-CIO breaking the "glass ceiling" in Easterling's election to a top executive office.

$1 million boosts Detroit strikers

By James B. Parks

Unions put their full weight and solidarity into an aggressive campaign to win a fair contract at Detroit's two newspapers, pledging $1 million, resources and personnel.

The AFL-CIO Executive Council, at its summer meeting in Chicago, created a $1 million fund to assist striking Detroit News and Free Press workers who are currently not receiving strike benefits. The federation contributed $100,000 and affiliated unions have promised to raise the remainder.

The council also approved a plan to use the federation's reserve fund to offer interest-free loans of up to $1 million to any union whose emergency fund is depleted.

The $1 million commitment was the first step in an aggressive campaign recommended by the Strategic Approaches Committee to bring justice to the 2,600 strikers who have been threatened with permanent replacement. "We're going to put on a comprehensive campaign that hits them above and beyond," said Mine Workers President Richard L. Trumka, who chairs the committee.

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling took the message to Detroit immediately after her election. "We recognize that this strike has significance far beyond Detroit. The attention of the entire nation is focused on this conflict," she told the strikers.

"I am here to bring this message to the striking workers: You are not alone. We will stand with you all the way until you achieve fairness and dignity," she said.

"I am also here to bring this message to Gannett and Knight-Ridder: You will not starve these workers into defeat," Easterling said. "The unions of the AFL-CIO will provide the financial support and other assistance that is necessary to sustain this strike until justice is served and our members have reached their goal — a new collective bargaining agreement."

Gannett owns the afternoon Detroit News and Knight-Ridder owns the morning Detroit Free Press.

The next day, in a demonstration of more than 200 trade unionists outside Gannett's corporate headquarters near Washington, Easterling declared, "This is the place where we've drawn our line in the sand."

Continued on Page 4

Workers follow hostile Congress into home districts

By Mike Hall

Labor confronted Congress with a "Three Days of Shame" vigil before the congressional recess, then geared up its largest Stand UP grass-roots effort to date to spotlight the "disgrace" of House actions on the budget.

The fiscal year 1996 Labor/HHS appropriations bill, H.R. 2127, passed 219-208 on Aug. 4. It slashes almost $6 billion from important workplace safety, education and training programs, and has become a stimulus for labor's outcry against Congress.

Thirty-four congressional districts have been selected for special action during the current recess, which lasts until after Labor Day. Radio, television and print ads will reach 26 congressional districts, and full-time coordinators have been assigned by the AFL-CIO and affiliated unions.

Workers will be encouraged to attend rallies, especially on Labor Day, to protest the continued attack on working families by the Republican-dominated Congress.

Working men and women will Stand UP by holding Legislative Action Committee meetings, including several with Republican House members, and leafleting at plant gates and job sites with fliers customized for each district. Special fliers will be distributed in the districts of every House member who voted for the Labor/HHS appropriations bill.

Unionists also will call the AFL-CIO's congressional hotline urging defeat of the Republicans' planned cuts in Medicare, Medicaid, education and workplace safety, all to fund tax breaks for the rich and big business.

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling and Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich used an Aug. 9 conference call to brief state AFL-CIO officers on the House damage to working people, which Reich described as far worse than any such move in the Reagan years.

Prior to the House appropriations vote, nearly three dozen rank-and-file union members came to Wash-

Continued on Page 3

COURTS

Leave act requires notice

A pregnant employee terminated for excessive absenteeism is not entitled to reinstatement because she did not inform her company she was taking leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act.

Although the act does not refer to the notice an employee must give, Labor Department implementation regulations require that "at a minimum, an employee must inform her employer of her condition with sufficient detail to make it evident that the requested leave is protected as FMLA-qualified."

The case began when Midwest Plastic Engineering fired Lori Van Dorsen in November 1993 for excessive, unexcused absences. Van Dorsen, who was six months pregnant, missed four days of work when her children became ill with chicken pox, and eight more days when she also contracted the chicken pox, all without doctor's notice.

U.S. Judge Robert Holmes Bell of the Western District of Michigan ruled that, although Van Dorsen had a serious health condition which qualified her for FMLA leave, she did not meet the minimum notification requirements under the regulations.

The case, Reich vs. Midwest Plastics Engineering, is the first FMLA suit to be decided by a court. The only other two cases were settled out of court. Overall, 90 percent of FMLA complaints are successfully resolved without resorting to lawsuits.

Cook election ordered

Based on a court decision, the National Labor Relations Board has ordered a new representation election at Cook Family Foods in Grayson, Ky.

Earlier this year, about 100 members of the Firemen and Oilers, which merged with Service Employees, ended an 18-month strike and returned to work. They returned after a federal appeals court in Cincinnati overturned an NLRB decision certifying the union as bargaining representative for the workers.

The issue was whether three workers who voted had been illegally fired for union activity. NLRB said they were illegally fired and could vote, but the appeals court disagreed. But the NLRB and the appeals court found the company had interfered with the employees' free choice through surveillance of union activities, physical harassment and interrogation of pro-union employees, and threats to move the plant.

The board July 14 invalidated the first election and ordered a new one.

USWA, USX settle

Some 1,700 Steelworkers will receive $47 million in back wages and interest under a settlement between the union and USX Corp.

In addition, the workers will collect between $5 million and $15 million in pension accruals.

The union sued USX, claiming the company violated federal pension laws when it shut down its Provo, Utah, mill in 1987, just days after a five-month national strike against USX ended. The company said the closure was due to excess capacity. But the union contended the plant was closed to avoid paying pension benefits, a violation of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act.

The settlement was based on a May 5 opinion on relief for the workers by U.S. Judge Bruce Jenkins, who in 1992 found that USX had illegally closed the plant to avoid pension payments.

Striker order upheld, deferred

By James B. Parks

The Clinton administration and organized labor won one round and lost another in the struggle to prevent companies from hiring permanent scabs.

U.S. District Judge Gladys Kessler let stand President Clinton's executive order barring federal contracts worth at least $100,000 to companies that permanently replace striking employees. But she issued an injunction against enforcing the order pending an appeal by business groups, led by the Chamber of Commerce.

In the July 31 ruling, Kessler said the president has broad authority to oversee purchasing and make any improvements. Courts don't pass judgment on the president's business acumen or how savvy an order is, she said. "Rather, the court will uphold such a directive so long as it is reasonably related to economic considerations."

Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich said the ruling is a victory for the president. "The courts confirmed that the president has the responsibility and authority to bar contracts with companies that permanently replace striking workers," Reich said.

"Companies bringing in replacements can't always assure the degree of quality that the government needs," he said.

Clinton signed the order March 6, saying that prolonged labor disputes and unstable labor relations among federal suppliers adversely affect the government's operations. Strikes involving permanent replacements generally last longer, the order said, and the replacement of a work force threatens the quality of a company's goods and services.

The order bans the use of permanent replacements by federal contractors on projects above $100,000, affecting only the worst element of the employer community, the AFL-CIO pointed out. The vast majority of unionized companies with federal contracts, about 99 percent, reach collective bargaining agreements without a strike.

Joining the lawsuit were the National Association of Manufacturers, the American Trucking Associations, the Labor Policy Association and Bridgestone/Firestone. The suit claims the order is illegal and politically motivated.

Bridgestone/Firestone is one of the companies that stands to lose millions in federal funds for using scabs. The Rubber Workers, before its merger with the Steelworkers, suspended a strike against the giant Japanese tire manufacturer May 22 and switched strategies in an effort to win a new contract.

Some 4,200 URW members in five states walked out July 12, 1994, almost three months after their contract had expired. The strike was the longest in tire industry history. During the strike, Bridgestone/Firestone hired 2,300 replacement workers.

Meanwhile, congressional Republicans kept up their attack on the order by approving, on a party-line vote, language in the Labor/HHS appropriations bill eliminating funding for enforcing the order.

Another anti-worker bill, the TEAM Act, failed to make it to the House floor before Congress left for the August recess.

The misnamed Teamwork for Employees and Management Act, S.295 and H.R. 743, introduced by Sen. Nancy L. Kassebaum (R-Kan.) and Rep. Steve Gunderson (R-Wis.), would lift the 60-year-old ban on company unions by amending Section 8(a)(2) of the National Labor Relations Act.

The bill has cleared the House Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee. The Senate Education and Labor Committee has held hearings on the bill but has taken no action.

Food Lion lashes out with lawsuit

Unable to disprove charges of unsanitary conditions, off-the-clock work and numerous other violations, Food Lion has tried to deflect blame by filing suit against its critics.

The $100 million suit against the Food and Commercial Workers and the AFL-CIO Food and Allied Service Trades Department is "ridiculous" and "without merit," said UFCW spokesman Allen Zack. "Food Lion once again is attempting to shift the blame for its misconduct onto anyone but Food Lion."

"Once again Food Lion has proven it prefers litigation and retribution instead of correction," said FAST President Robert F. Harbrant, one of several union officials specifically named in the suit. "Food Lion has consistently made anti-consumer and anti-worker initiatives a part of its operating philosophy," he said.

"The litigation is apparently designed to chill and stave off anyone who raises their head and voice to speak out against injustice, but this action will fail like all their previous moves," Harbrant added.

The suit was filed at about the same time that a coalition of labor and consumer groups called for a federal and state investigation into worker charges that Food Lion may have had prior knowledge of sanitary inspections of its stores last year.

The suit, filed July 25 in the U.S. District Court for Western North Carolina, claims the union and FAST conspired for more than a decade to cause "massive injury" to the grocery chain's business and reputation and "ultimately to drive Food Lion out of business."

Food Lion claims the corporate campaign has cost it hundreds of millions of dollars in lost sales and profits and has sharply curtailed the company's ability to expand into new markets.

The 177-page suit charges UFCW and FAST "maliciously and systematically" fed false allegations about the company to the media and used disgruntled employees to entice ABC television's "Prime Time Live" news show to run a "sensational" piece that charged Food Lion with selling outdated meats and having unsanitary deli conditions.

The fallout from the show caused Food Lion to have reduced sales and profits, forcing the closing of 84 stores, the suit claims. A similar Food Lion suit against ABC was dismissed in March 1995.

The suit claims the union had no "legitimate interest" in representing or assisting workers who were forced to work off the clock. The UFCW, which does not represent the workers, filed a 1991 complaint in their behalf with the U.S. Labor Department. Food Lion reached a record $16.2 million settlement with the department for violating the Fair Labor Standards Act in that case.

Food Lion is the nation's ninth largest grocery retailer, with 1,046 stores in 14 states. In 1994 it had sales of $7.9 billion.

— James B. Parks

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Director of Information: Rex Hardesty

Editor: Michael Byrne

Assistant Editors: David Kameras, Colleen M. O'Neill, James B. Parks

Staff Writers: Muriel H. Cooper, Mike Hall Sharolyn A. Rosier

Graphics/Layout: Stan Hitt, Hindi M. Fracasse

AFL-CIO Press Secretary: Candice Johnson

AFL-CIO Headquarters: 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006
Telephone: (202) 637-5010 • CompuServe: 71112,53 • Internet: http://www.afl-cio.org

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Labor resolute in life-or-death job safety fight

Council slams attempts to cripple protections

By Colleen M. O'Neill

The AFL-CIO assailed Republicans now waging an all-out assault on the nation's job safety and health laws, urging Congress to reject legislation that threatens workers' lives.

The attack, on a number of fronts, "is being led by a group of House Republicans from the business community whose interest is protecting business profits rather than protecting worker health and safety," the Executive Council said in a statement at its summer meeting in Chicago.

"Labor's biggest problem is the nation's biggest problem," AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue added at a news conference. "It's a congressional majority that apparently doesn't care about the people, and expresses a national indifference to the condition of workers and to the conditions of families."

While Donahue spoke, labor was gathering people on Capitol Hill from a number of unions to be televised into their home communities, "telling the stories of workers who needed these protections and what the loss of those protections and regulations means to them," he said. "I think that's going to be an effective hit in the home districts of those members of Congress."

That three-day vigil, a "campaign of shame," is an adjunct to the federation's Stand UP campaign that is spreading the word of the anti-worker actions at the grass-roots level during the August recess. It included nearly three dozen union members from AFSCME, Communications Workers, Service Employees, Teamsters, UAW, UNITE and other unions.

Besides television and radio interviews, the unionists participated in news conferences, lobbying visits with members of Congress and monitored activities from the House Gallery.

Through all this activity, the AFL-CIO is casting the spotlight on those lawmakers seeking irresponsible and devastating cuts in the budgets of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the Mine Safety and Health Administration and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

The proposed job safety cuts, said House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.), would bring back "workplace atrocities and sweatshop standards that we have strived to eliminate for more than half a century."

The Department of Labor issued a report during the vigil that predicted an additional 50,000 workers would suffer injuries on the job, with another 50,000 contracting work-related illnesses if Congress were to pass four legislative proposals that would cut funding and safety measures: the appropriations bill, a measure put forth by Rep. Cass Ballenger (R-N.C.) to streamline OSHA (H.R. 1834), a regulatory reform measure (S. 343) championed by Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole (R-Kan.) and product liability legislation.

The council noted in a statement that the Republican proposals would only increase the already high incidence of workplace injuries and illnesses.



From "SHAME TV," Labor Institute of Public Affairs

This television image shows workers talking with Rep. Patrick Kennedy (D-R.I.) as part of labor's "Three Days of Shame" vigil.

"Americans did not vote to roll back safety and health laws and protections for workers," the federation said. "We must intensify and expand our efforts to educate union members and to organize effective opposition to these measures."

AFL-CIO Safety and Health Committee Chairman Morton Bahr laid out for the council the issues in contention, highlighting the biggest threats as the Ballenger bill, which would "emasculate the OSHA and MSHA laws," and the Labor/HHS appropriations bill.

Bahr proposed a seven-point plan to defend safety and health:

- Membership education and outreach through mailings, stories in union publications and speeches at conferences and meetings.
- Broad-based membership activities focused on generating petitions from local unions for delivery at a press event in mid-October.
- Targeted activities in Washington, including turning out local union members for additional hearings on the Ballenger bill and for the committee markup and floor vote on the bill.
- Targeted grass-roots activities, including vigils and protests at selected congressional offices.
- Coordinated activities with the AFL-CIO's broader legislative grass-roots efforts, including linking union safety and health activists and staff with AFL-CIO congressional recess activities.
- Media outreach.
- Working in coalition with other groups, particularly those with whom the AFL-CIO and unions already have a relationship, to oppose proposed regulatory reform legislation.

Trade unionists registered a win on the health and safety front recently when an all-out lobbying campaign by the Fire Fighters saved a crucial rule specifying the practice of using the buddy system to fight fires, with two workers inside a burning building protected by two workers outside.

Republicans had sought to kill the regulation as part of the first "Corrections Day," a concept pioneered by Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) to get rid of excess regulation. After testimony from IAFF official Harold A. Schaitberger, GOP lawmakers pulled the bill from the Corrections Day process.

Unions applaud Clinton's move on timber jobs

Timber, pulp and paper workers lauded President Clinton's signing of the emergency timber salvage measure, which was part of the overall rescissions package for 1995 spending.

The measure allows the U.S. Forest Service to conduct salvage sales to remove dead and damaged timber, which might infect healthy trees and serve as kindling for wildfires. According to various estimates, there are more than 21 million board feet of dead, dying and diseased timber in federal forests.

"By signing this amendment, President Clinton has helped save the jobs of our members and tens of thousands of other men and women employed in the forest products industry," said Wayne E. Glenn, president of the Paperworkers. "This amendment is a balanced approach to the forest health and timber supply crises."

"Salvage timber, if harvested in time, not only protects our forests but can help stop the mill closures and job loss plaguing our industry, particularly in Oregon, Washington and Northern California," said Carpenters President Sigurd Lucassen. "Dead and dying timber can provide new life for our national forests and timber-dependent communities."

UPIU represents approximately 275,000 pulp, paper, wood and other workers across the country. The Carpenters' Association of Western Pulp and Paper Workers, based in Portland, Ore., represents some 14,000 pulp and paper workers in the Western United States.

House shows no shame in gutting worker programs

Continued from Page 1

ington to confront the Republicans over the budget cuts.

Participants in the "Shame" vigil told reporters they have benefited from the programs the Republicans are trying to gut. Others told stories of lax enforcement that needs to be strengthened, not cut.

Many of the workers — including members of AFSCME, Communications Workers, Service Employees, Teamsters, UAW and UNITE — were from districts represented by Republican backers of the bill. At sites around the Capitol, the workers were interviewed, with their comments beamed by satellite to their hometown television stations. Interviews were made available to more than 600 stations.

Passage of the Labor/HHS appropriations bill followed two days of intense debate on the House floor. The bill cuts workplace safety funding and places restrictions on safety enforcement, dramatically reduces funds for education and training and launches an unprecedented attack on the National Labor Relations Board.

"What the House has done . . . is a disgrace," AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue said. "Workers and their unions will spare no effort to turn back this Republican assault on working people."

Reich, urging the Senate to reverse the anti-worker cuts, said the House action would "block the path to new work for Americans who need job training, eliminate summer jobs for young people who want to work and reverse two decades of progress in making workplaces safer."

The bill cuts federal Occupational Safety and Health enforcement by one-third. About half the federal inspectors could face layoffs, and 50,000 more workplace injuries and deaths could occur each year because of the cuts.

Funds also were cut 12 percent for such activities as stopping illegal sweatshops, spotting child labor violations, making employers pay wages due workers and protecting migrant farm workers.

Funds to enforce the Davis-Bacon and the Service Contract Acts were cut by 25 percent, and Republicans pledged to eventually repeal the laws.

The Republicans also left retirees to fend for themselves by cutting Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration programs that ensure workers' pensions are protected from unscrupulous corporations.

One of the most dangerous Republican moves was the one-third budget cut for the NLRB and the curtailing of the board's ability to pursue certain key court actions to protect workers.

"The use of this legislation as a blunt weapon to assault workers, their families and vulnerable members of the community is unprecedented and makes clear the choices the Republican leadership is making to side with corporate interests over the middle-class working family," AFL-CIO Legislative Director Peggy Taylor said.

Rep. David Obey (D-Wis.) called the Republicans "gutless" for attaching so many provisions to the bill. "This bill is going to . . . make workers more vulnerable to the whims of their employers who want to avoid the minimum wage, or the 40-hour week, or the rules for fair labor practices or standards for a safe working environment," he said.

"Gingrich Republicans would rather invest in a tax break for the fat cats than the education, training and health and safety of American workers," Rep. Lynn Woolsey (D-Calif.) said.

The bill now goes to the Senate, where action is not expected until September. But the House will be voting on the budget again, Taylor cautioned, urging AFL-CIO activists to keep up their pressure on House members.

"They'll be involved again in the conference report," she told state AFL-CIO leaders, "and you should continue to let them know exactly how you feel." There's also a strong possibility of an attempt to override a veto by President Clinton. Taylor also warned union activists not to hold out false hopes that the damage the House has done workers will be corrected in the Senate.

BARGAINING

IBT rejects carhaul deal

Talks between the Teamsters and the nation's carhaul companies are expected to resume soon after workers overwhelmingly rejected the latest contract offer.

The union said it intends no immediate strike in order to pursue a campaign to put pressure on the 17 transport companies whose 13,000 workers are covered by the agreement.

As part of the campaign, workers have been conducting informational leafleting outside General Motors' new-car showrooms at a dozen selected locations, telling prospective buyers that GM's relationship with the carhaul companies is harming drivers.

The union charges that GM has been encouraging unionized transport companies to rely on non-union subsidiaries to deliver new cars to GM showrooms.

The major issue in the negotiations is the companies' double breasting to avoid paying union wages and benefits.

UFCW approves IBP pact

The Food and Commercial Workers avoided a strike and approved a new four-year contract for 3,300 workers at IBP Inc.'s Dakota City, Neb., beef slaughter and fabrication plant.

The agreement eliminates the current two-tier wage system in the final year. Workers hired after December 1986 will receive wage increases of as much as 75 cents over the term of the contract, raising the hourly rate from $8.45 to $9.20 for slaughter-line workers and from $8.67 to $9.02 for fabrication department employees. The workers also will get a $650 lump-sum payment in September.

Workers hired before December 1986 will receive smaller raises —15 to 27 cents an hour — but will get a $3,100 lump-sum bonus.

Harvard, workers agree

White-collar workers and Harvard University reached a tentative three-year agreement that would provide wage increases of nearly 14 percent. A ratification vote will be taken in early September.

The agreement won by the Harvard Union of Clerical and Technical Workers, an AFSCME local, covers 3,600 office, library and laboratory support staff.

Under the tentative agreement, workers would receive raises of 1.3 percent, 1.8 percent and 1.3 percent, respectively, over the three years, with 3 percent "progression" raises in each year. The average salary in the unit is $26,000.

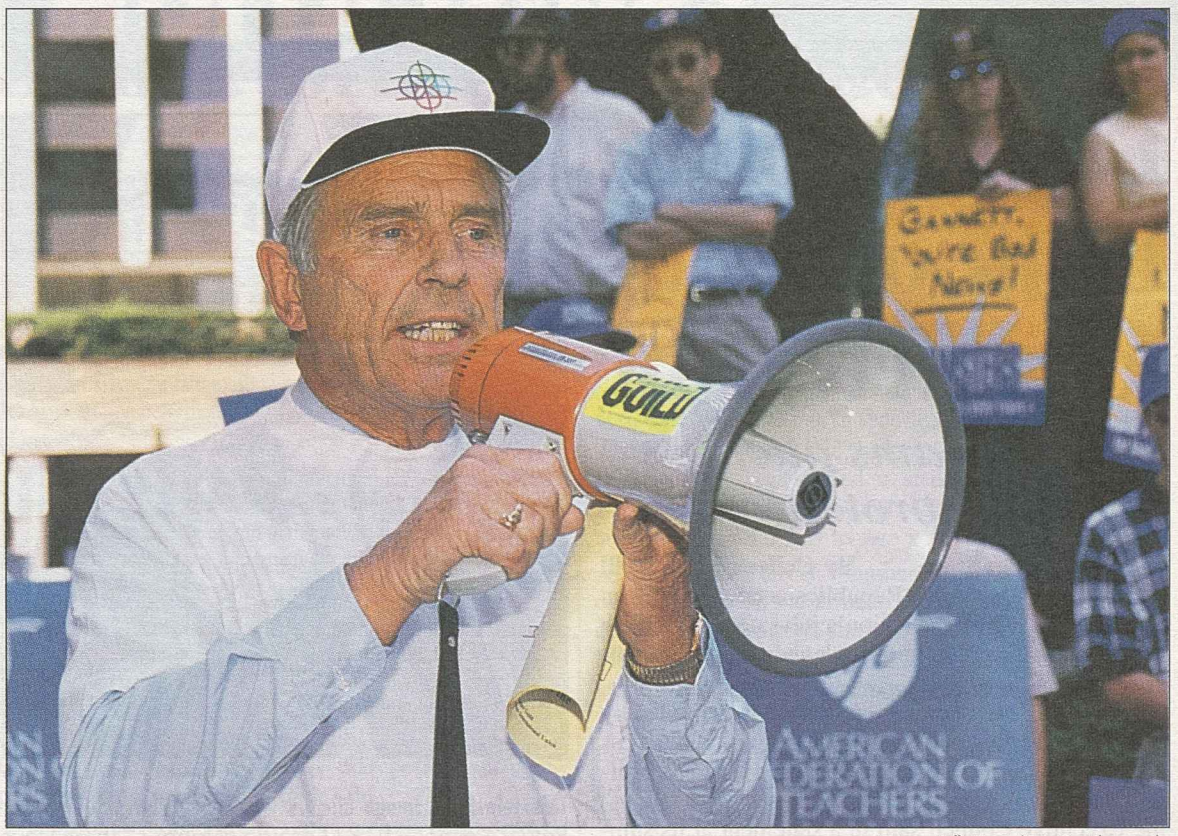
The agreement also includes such new or expanded work and family benefits as flexible scheduling and job sharing. It establishes a fund to reimburse employees for adoption costs and provides additional funds for education and child care.

IUOE strikes rock plants

Operating Engineers Local 12 walked out Aug. 1 at rock, sand, and gravel sites in 11 southern California counties after four companies unilaterally reduced wages and benefits.

The strike involves about 5,000 IUOE members. The contracts expired Sept. 15, 1994. After months of unproductive talks, two of the plants imposed their final offers, cutting wages and benefits by about 25 percent, and the other two did the same in June.

The companies also cut medical plan contributions from $560 a month per worker to $400.



Marianne Keffer Zweig/Page One Photography

Graphic Communications Union President James J. Norton addresses some 200 demonstrators outside Gannett's headquarters, as unionists protested management's intransigence in the Detroit newspaper strike.

Detroit strikers get good news

Labor vows challenge to two publishing giants

Continued from Page 1

Easterling was joined by James J. Norton, president of the Graphic Communications Union, and Charles Dale, president of The Newspaper Guild, as well as representatives of the Communications Workers and the Teamsters, as she tried to deliver a petition to Gannett Chairman John Curley urging renewed negotiations.

The Strategic Approaches Committee established a task force to coordinate a national program to support the strike. The task force, which will meet with Trumka in Detroit Aug. 15, is headed by AFL-CIO Organizing Director Joe Shantz and includes representatives of the Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO, the Council of Newspaper Unions, AFL-CIO Industrial Union Department and key unions in Detroit.

The council also called for:

- A review of possible antitrust violations by the newspapers, and a meeting with U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno to discuss the antitrust issue.
- An intense outreach and mobilization of rank-and-file unionists in the Detroit area and throughout Michigan and a program to bring in trade unionists from around the country in a massive show of support for the striking unions.
- Development of solidarity actions at other facilities owned by Gannett and Knight-Ridder.
- An adopt-the-family program to assist the families of striking workers.
- Development of an action plan for Labor Day.

Meanwhile, the strikers' campaign to cut the papers' advertising and circulation continues to gain. Most of the advertisers have dropped out, said George Curtin, the campaign coordinator.

The unions are starting a special postcard campaign to convince Dayton-Hudson stores to pull its ads. The Minnesota-based company ran several full-page ads in the newspapers' combined Sunday scab editions. Initially, some 25,000 cards will be distributed to union members to send to Dayton-Hudson.

The AFL-CIO responded to an earlier request by the unions for help by assigning Curtin and field representatives Roger Clayman and Shavonne Perpena to assist the unions. Rev. Michael Szpak, AFL-CIO religious coordinator, also is meeting with local religious leaders to form a community coalition in support of the workers.

The 2,600 employees walked out July 13 after negotiations failed to produce agreement on a new contract. Contracts expired April 30 at the newspapers and the jointly-owned Detroit Newspaper Agency, which operates the two papers' non-editorial activities. The DNA refused to extend the contracts past July 2, even though talks resumed briefly July 9.

Both sides will sit down together Aug. 16 for the first time in more than a month in a meeting called by Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service Director John Calhoun Wells. Wells said he was convening the meeting to develop a strategy for negotiations.

The papers are demanding 200 job cuts, givebacks on health care, restrictions on the grievance procedure, shifting of some full-time jobs to part time with no benefits and elimination of 1,600 news carriers.

The Detroit News also imposed a so-called "merit pay system" for editorial staff represented by Newspaper Guild Local 22, a system that Dale calls "favoritism pay." The Free Press, meanwhile, threatened to permanently replace its Guild members who did not return to the newsroom by Aug. 10.

When the papers were losing money three years ago, workers agreed to give up pay raises and 350 jobs. Last year, the newspapers made $55 million.

Besides TNG, the unions working together in the Council of Newspaper Unions include IBT, two GCIU locals and CWA.

AFT: Global economy requires higher academic standards

America's public schools must raise their minimum comprehension standards if students are to compete in a global work force, said AFT President Albert Shanker during the Quest '95 educational conference in Washington.

"We are pleased that almost every state is working on improving education standards," he said. However, "in too many states, standards are not clear and specific enough to be useful to teachers and students, and most states don't plan to hold students accountable for meeting the standards in any meaningful way."

More than 2,500 teachers attended the July 27-30 conference, built around the release of the AFT report, "Making Standards Matter: A Fifty-State Progress Report on Efforts to Raise Academic Standards," and workshops discussing topics such as privatization, special education issues, school discipline and violence.

Almost every student in foreign countries takes national tests, providing greater incentive for all students — not just those planning to go to college — to work hard.

In comparison, said Shanker, the United States has very basic standards required for its students. "The demand for meaningful change is more intense than ever," he said.

Yet as the educators met to address these issues, congressional cannons are aimed to attack public education. In an address to the conference, President Clinton assailed the effort to get rid of his Goals 2000 program, "which gives teachers the chance to really do something significant. It is not necessary to cut education to balance the budget," he said.

Shanker said the AFT urges "all Americans who also draw the line on education to let their representatives know that they don't want to mortgage the nation's future just to balance the federal budget in time for a re-election campaign."

The AFT's Educational Foundation also has released television and print versions of a public service announcement asking the public to "insist on higher academic standards" in their districts.

— Muriel H. Cooper

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

AFL-CIO plans millions for organizing, training

By Michael Byrne
Chicago

Organizing was the order of the day as the AFL-CIO Executive Council moved on a variety of fronts to bolster labor's sagging membership, including moving forward with a multimillion-dollar fund devoted to organizing.

The fund was one of several avenues suggested in a report by the ad hoc committee on organizing, chaired by Graphic Communications Union President James J. Norton, who noted that the fund could be funded through monies made available by the Union Privilege MasterCard program, now being renegotiated with the Bank of New York.

AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue explained that the competition for labor's huge account, combined with the bank's decision to do its own marketing, could yield as much as $20 million over a period of five years. In the past, Union Privilege has used monies returned to the program for such associate membership programs as the California Immigrant Worker Association and the Montana Family Union.

Until that money is realized, Donahue recommended that the fund be implemented at $5 million, financed through the interest income from the AFL-CIO reserve fund, which now stands at $58 million.

In the long term, a Union Privilege program could provide $20 million. In the first year, $5 million could be available from interest on the federation's reserve fund.

The council asked the Norton committee to study those options, as well as the suggestion that the funds be used for multiunion organizing campaigns in certain industries, with a small group of union presidents selected to oversee and outlay the funds, and to make recommendations at the council's special Sept. 21 meeting.

Norton also reported on other avenues suggested for invigorating organizing within the AFL-CIO, including new uses of central labor councils, an experiment with less-than-exclusive representation, the creation of professional or semi-professional worker organizations and the creation of a broad-based national organization for workers, perhaps modeled after the American Association of Retired Persons.

The committee recommended a closer working relationship between the Department of Organization and Field Services and the federation's Organizing Institute, which it judged to be a major success story.

Donahue said he intended to dramatically increase the budget for the institute in an effort to double the recruitment and training of new organizers. This year, the institute will train 900 people, the council was told by institute Director Richard Bensinger and Assistant Director Allison Porter.

Bensinger said the institute's surveys have shown that the program's success has been because of the types of programs that unions are developing in the field, rather than specific training.

"We went into the field to see if we could find out why an AFT local in New Jersey or a Service Employees local in Ohio were able to gain membership so dramatically," he said. "They had a lot in common not so much in approach to organizing, but with spending money."

Bensinger cited SEIU District 1199, where President Tom Woodruff had shifted 35 percent of his resources to organizing, dividing a staff of 14 equally

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Kirkland takes leave imparting counsel to labor

By Rex Hardesty
Chicago

Lane Kirkland retired as AFL-CIO president at the start of the Aug. 1 Executive Council meeting, with brief farewell comments focused exclusively on the future needs of American workers and the AFL-CIO processes essential to serving those needs.

"You are all good leaders," Kirkland told the council. "You have your particular style of leadership, and maybe one works better than another. I did it my way and I would freely admit to any shortcomings you want to attribute.

"But I would suggest to you that the great problem of the American trade union movement is not leadership, it is followship." Anyone who wants to strengthen followship, Kirkland said, should focus on two areas:

- Examine the union's record in affiliations with state and local central bodies. "In the talk about grass-roots activity and forming coalitions, I suggest the first coalition to focus on is the American trade union movement at every level," Kirkland said, calling state and local AFL-CIOs the "firing line."
- Cooperate in concerted political activity through COPE. "There are organizations within the federation that keep COPE at arm's length," he said. Noting how far superior COPE is today compared with the early days of the AFL-CIO, Kirkland said today's problems "don't come from programs, but from degree of participation, particularly from affiliates providing lists of members."

Kirkland also told the council that the AFL-CIO staff does not make policy decisions, that the current staff "is dedicated, faithful and has done what is asked of them." Even though it's popular for one staff to derogate another, Kirkland said, "one should pursue one's own ambitions on one's own merits, not by tearing down others."

Kirkland also traced the importance of July in his life: in 1942, when he joined his union, the Masters, Mates and Pilots; in 1948, when he joined the staff of the old American Federation of Labor; in 1969, when his election by the May Executive Council meeting was made effective in July, and finally, July 31, 1995, his last full day as AFL-CIO president.

Kirkland left some farewell thoughts with the council in the form of two texts, his speech in Chicago to the final 1995 AFL-CIO regional conference, on the AFL-CIO's structure and goals here at home, and a proposal he submitted last year to the board of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

The latter document lays out the permanent trade union mission of pursuing worker rights at all times, at all costs in all forums around the globe. Both are available from the Department of Reproduction and Mailing, at 202/637-5041.



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

Lane Kirkland passes the gavel to the new president, Tom Donahue, saying, "Wear it in good health."

Kirkland graduated from the Merchant Marine Academy when he was 20, but had been at sea two years before as a cadet. Cadets weren't allowed to join a union and the 18-year-old Kirkland "came within an inch of joining the Communist Party. I was courted and I was interested, but in the middle of a voyage, Germany invaded Russia.

"The party line changed immediately. Everything that they said yesterday was a lie and the lies for the next day were 180 degrees different," Kirkland said. "It was too fast for me, so I stayed out of it, thank God."

Citing when he became executive assistant to George Meany in 1960, Kirkland said: "I've done 35 years on the bridge of this ship. It is now my watch below and I go with a sense of pride."

When he turned the gavel over to Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue, Kirkland was asked to stay awhile. He heard from a number of his admirers on the council.

"There has never been an occasion — at international or regional meetings — when I haven't been proud of what you've done," said senior AFL-CIO Vice President Al Shanker.

Jim Hatfield called Kirkland "a great leader of extreme honesty and integrity who set a high standard for all of us." Bill Bywater said, "you're the best labor leader I've ever known. You've been absolutely fair, the epitome of what leaders should be."

Lenore Miller noted, "the measure of your class is this last statement you just made, without condemnation of anyone and with praise for your staff." Jay Mazur said Kirkland turned labor around a corner, where "never again can anyone care about American workers without caring about workers everywhere."

On behalf of the Coalition of Labor Union Women, Gloria Johnson thanked Kirkland for the special interest he showed in family and women's issues.

Two council members, Moe Biller and Mike Sacco, told of meetings long ago, when Kirkland tried to put together mergers of multiple unions. Biller recalled how he helped block the postal effort and Sacco reported Kirkland's work with the maritime unions.

Morton Bahr said he remembered Kirkland's long-range vision of appropriate union mergers "because of the technology and the way the newspaper industry is going." Bahr also recalled going with Kirkland to a meeting on grievances of Spanish and Filipino employees at U.S. Air Force bases and, "it was a privilege to see your daring and aggressiveness in caring for those workers' problems."

Wayne Glenn told Kirkland, "you have served the labor movement well and we all owe you," and Owen Bieber recalled his own opposition to UAW disaffiliation in 1968 and the failed efforts to come back in 1977. "If not for you being the president, we wouldn't have come back in 1981, either."

John Joyce thanked Kirkland for "the standard you set for collegial leadership" and noted American labor "was lucky to have that intellect." Bob Georgine said he never ceased to be impressed with Kirkland's fairness, including "saying no to your friends when that was right."

Several others were awaiting a turn when a halt was called after 26 minutes of such commentary. Then the entire council lined up for handshakes, hugs and goodbyes to the AFL-CIO's second president.

Sweeney slate promises win at convention

By Michael Byrne
Chicago

Service Employees President John J. Sweeney and Mine Workers President Richard L. Trumka, losing bids for AFL-CIO president and secretary-treasurer in the Executive Council election, said they remain confident they will win election at the AFL-CIO convention in October.

Sweeney and Trumka, along with AFSCME Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson, who is running for a proposed position of executive vice president, told reporters the morning before the council elected Tom Donahue and Barbara Easterling that they have the support of 25 unions representing nearly 60 percent of the AFL-CIO membership.

Among those supporting the slate are the federation's two largest affiliates, the Teamsters and AFSCME, as well as SEIU, UAW, Machinists and Steelworkers. Leaders from those unions and others joined the candidates at the news conference, as well as at a rally the day before at Chicago's Union Park, where nearly 1,000 supporters gathered.

Sweeney and Trumka lost to Donahue and Easterling by identical 21-12 votes in the council, after which each moved that the elections be declared unanimous. Donahue-Easterling's largest supporters include the Food and Commercial Workers, AFT, the Electrical Workers, UNITE and the federal and postal unions.

"I would hope we can continue the dialogue we have started in terms of the future of the federation," Sweeney told the council. "I would encourage everyone of you, as I will do myself, to support Tom Donahue from now until the convention. We need to have a strong and united labor movement."

Donahue accepted and distributed to the council a series of Sweeney resolutions that outlined the challengers' campaign proposals on organizing, political action, strategic campaigns, communications, governance and international relations. The proposals included:

- An organizing fund of at least $20 million with increased funding for the Organizing Institute. Sweeney also called for an organizing department separate from other field operations, equipped with an office of strategic planning, and a network of local organizing centers.
- Grass-roots political recruitment and training, with central labor councils on the front lines. The Sweeney camp also wants to create a center for economic and public policy development and a special fund for the 1996 elections, through either a special per capita tax assessment or transfer from the federation's reserve fund.
- An aggressive public relations operation that would project the voice of workers through top AFL-CIO officers, with expanded television advertising.
- A revamping of international relations with world trade unions, focusing on the interests of American workers. Sweeney called for a monitoring project that would track transnational corporations on behalf of workers around the world.
- A restructured governance system that would include the executive vice president as a third top officer, an age limit of 70 for general officers, and expanded and more frequent Executive Council and General Board meetings.

The proposed executive vice president position must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the convention. Chavez-Thompson indicated she would like to see the duties of that office shaped to her background as an organizer.

"I'm a hell of an organizer," said the daughter of a cotton sharecropper in Texas. "I was able to organize in a right-to-work state, and it wasn't easy. But we've done it."

Sweeney said that Donahue had copied many of his proposals with his aggressive moves for change. But Donahue insisted at his news conference that he has been expressing the same views for years and, as chairman of the Committee on the Evolution of Work, had propelled change with creation of the Organizing Institute, the Union Privilege benefits program, the Labor Institute of Public Affairs and other initiatives.

"But as I measure what is there today, it's not enough. We have to do more," Donahue said.

If there is a difference between the two programs, Donahue said, it is that Sweeney "proposes a whole series of committees and structures which are apparently proposed to exist both inside and outside the current structure of the federation — any number of committees, institutes and strategy groups and so forth."

"I don't think that's the sound way to approach it," he said. "I don't think the AFL-CIO should contract out its work. I think we ought to build the capacity to do these things and to defend worker interests within the federation."

Sweeney told reporters the biggest difference between the two candidates "is the degree of change we will bring — how fast and ambitiously we will move. We don't want any Band-Aid approaches. We need to mobilize the rank and file."

Trumka addressed not only the pace of change, but the quality of change. "The change we're seeing taking place is more profound than a change of leadership. We intend to change the culture of the labor movement. We will move the debate beyond the Executive Council to the state federations and central labor councils, all across the country."

The ultimate decision, Donahue noted, will come at the AFL-CIO convention Oct. 23-26, when some 700 delegates "look at the question of the qualifications, the competence of each of us, whether they think one program is indeed superior to the other. They'll have to make those judgments."

Because of the unprecedented political challenge at the convention, Donahue moved "to assure that the processes are fair" by arranging a meeting between the two campaigns to work out details on constitutional rules and credentials.

A list of delegates and per-capita voting strength will be provided to each side as they are compiled, he said.



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

Service Employees President John J. Sweeney, a candidate for AFL-CIO president, is flanked by Mine Workers President Richard L. Trumka, a candidate for secretary-treasurer, and AFSCME Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson, who is running for the proposed position of executive vice president, as they are joined by some of their supporters at a news conference before the Executive Council meeting in Chicago.

'Action on Pepsi Weekend' set to help Staley workers

By James B. Parks

The AFL-CIO turned up the heat on A.E. Staley to gain a fair contract for locked-out workers and took on new national campaigns at Overnite Express and Carr Realty.

The Executive Council, meeting in Chicago, endorsed and urged all affiliates and central bodies to join the Paperworkers' "Action on Pepsi Weekend," Aug. 25-27, to publicize Pepsi's connection to the Staley lockout.

By purchasing about 30 percent of Staley's sweetener, Pepsi is "effectively subsidizing Staley's attacks on its workers," the council said. It urged Pepsi "to use its discretion to replace Staley as a supplier of corn sweetener for its soft drinks until Staley ends the lockout and signs a fair labor agreement."

The "Action on Pepsi Weekend" is the latest in an all-out effort by organized labor to bring the lockout to an end and gain justice for the workers, Mine Workers President Richard L. Trumka reported to the council.

Trumka, who heads the Strategic Approaches Committee, said the federation will increase pressure on Staley by asking affiliates and central labor councils to organize handbilling and leafleting on the Action Weekend and other days, and to write Pepsi CEO Wayne Calloway to urge him to stop buying Staley products.

The AFL-CIO also will continue to contact international labor organizations, especially in Great Britain, to encourage international support for Staley workers, he said.

Some 760 Staley employees, formerly Allied Industrial Workers, were locked out on June 27, 1993, after Staley, a subsidiary of London-based conglomerate Tate & Lyle, demanded major concessions.

The AFL-CIO, affiliated unions and locals have donated about $130,000 to help workers on strike or locked out at three plants in Decatur, Ill. — Staley, Caterpillar and Bridgestone/Firestone. The UAW is providing for its members on strike at Caterpillar. The Steelworkers are providing for members, formerly with the Rubber Workers, who are still out of work at Bridgestone/Firestone around the country.

The Strategic Approaches Committee also agreed to take on the Teamsters' first-contract campaign against Overnite Express, the nation's largest carrier with more than 10,000 freight workers, Trumka said. Between 1958 and 1994, there have been 84 union representation elections and not one union contract. For example, IBT Local 705 in Chicago won an election in 1982 and still has no contract.

The IBT filed 53 election petitions between November 1994 and May 1995, winning 14 votes covering 1,600 workers, with wins anticipated in 17 more. Overnite, a subsidiary of Union Pacific Railroad, agreed to settle some 40 unfair labor practice complaints with the National Labor Relations Board. Meanwhile, the company has played a major lobbying role in getting Republicans to vote a 30 percent reduction in the NLRB's budget.

The Teamsters plan to develop a comprehensive corporate campaign, with the help of the committee, to pressure Overnite and Union Pacific to respect the labor rights of employees.

The committee also agreed to help the Service Employees with a national campaign against Carr Realty and the Equitable Companies.

Carr, Washington's largest real estate owner, has a long record of using non-union janitors and has virtually barred the use of union contractors. The SEIU's Janitors for Justice campaign has had some highly visible civil disobedience demonstrations in front of Carr properties.

Equitable is Carr's largest supplier of capital and has two members on Carr's board of directors. Equitable's major owner is Axa, a French insurance company.

AFL-CIO work internationally to be reshaped

By Michael Byrne
Chicago

The AFL-CIO will revamp its international institutes as it prepares to reshape international activity to meet the challenges of an evolving global economy.

President Tom Donahue appointed Jim Baker, former European representative, to oversee the integration of the institutes, which have for decades provided assistance to workers in every part of the globe while coordinating activities among U.S. and foreign unions.

The institutes — the American Institute for Free Labor Development, the African American Labor Center, the Asian American Free Labor Institute and the Free Trade Union Institute — are being victimized by Congress, which is trying to cut their primary funding sources, the National Endowment for Democracy, the U.S. Agency for International Development and the U.S. Information Agency.

Donahue said Baker would supervise a reorganization and consolidation of the programs, which would "bring them into a closer working relationship." The institutes already have moved into a single headquarters and have started the process of integrating their bookkeeping, he said.

Baker spent nine years in Europe, serving as U.S. Worker Delegate to the International Labor Organization and helping with a number of international corporate campaigns from his office in Paris. In 1993, he moved to Washington to serve as executive assistant to President Lane Kirkland.

In seeking to refocus the international work of the AFL-CIO, "we can look back with satisfaction on the contribution this labor movement made to the fall of communism — from Gdansk to the support of dissidents all across Eastern Europe," Donahue said in his inaugural address.

"While many in business sought only commerce and profit from trading with the Soviet system, the labor movement sought and fought for change and freedom. And we were right," he said.

"Now we look forward with a new sense of determination to dealing with the multinational corporations that roam the planet in search of cheap and exploited labor," Donahue said. "We must stand with workers in overseas nations not only because they, too, are our brothers and sisters — but because working Americans do not live on an economic island, insulated from events in other countries and their harsher consequences."

Addressing reporters Aug. 1, Donahue pointed to the recent labor summit in Denver, in which leaders of 24 national trade union organizations in the Western Hemisphere came together to demand that worker rights be considered in any bilateral or multilateral trade agreements.

"We will concentrate our attention to assisting those unions in developing themselves and organizing workers, and to help them to come face-to-face with the multinational corporations," he said.

Besides Baker's work with the institutes, the future shape of AFL-CIO international work may be determined by the federation's International Affairs subcommittee on organizing and international solidarity, which is preparing a series of recommendations based on a survey of affiliated unions.

UNITE President Jay Mazur, who chairs the subcommittee, said the panel would be looking at how the federation could "expand, coordinate and maximize the use of data bases and other research resources in developing information on corporations, codes of conduct, local and international laws and other matters that impact organizing."

He said the panel also would study how the AFL-CIO can increase the involvement of affiliates in international trade secretariats and how the federation can assist affiliates in pro-active, strategic planning on an international level.

"U.S. unions, to a greater extent than is understood by the public and probably even within the ranks of the labor movement itself, have taken significant steps in reaching out to unions around the world to meet the challenges of the new global economy," Mazur said.



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

Tom Donahue faces reporters for the first time as president of the AFL-CIO at the Executive Council meeting.

Donahue poses ambitious agenda

Continued from Page 1

AFL-CIO legislative department, Susan Washington, responsible for grass-roots training, and created the position of assistant to the president for communications, to be filled on an interim basis by consultants Frank Greer and David Mitchell. He also named a press secretary, Candice Johnson, amid a host of administrative appointments **(See Newsmakers, Page 11).**



Susan Washington

● Authorization to make interest-free loans of up to $1 million from the AFL-CIO reserve fund to any union whose defense fund is in need of immediate assistance in a strike situation. The council also approved a $100,000 donation to a $1 million fund to help the Teamsters in the multiunion strike against the Detroit newspapers. The authorization came on a report of the Strategic Approaches Committee. **(See story, Page 1).**

● The creation of a committee, chaired by Donahue and including Sweeney, to examine the AFL-CIO governance structure and to try to develop recommendations to the convention for an open, inclusive and decisive decision-making process. Donahue began that process by inviting presidents of all affiliated unions to the second-day session of the council.

Other members of the committee include: Arthur Coia, president of the Laborers; Joseph Greene, president of the School Administrators; Albert Shanker, president of the AFT; Gloria Johnson, vice president of the Electronic Workers; Jim LaSala, president of the Amalgamated Transit Union; and Marilyn Lenard, president of the Florida AFL-CIO.

Donahue also assigned Easterling to review the structure at the AFL-CIO headquarters and field staff, with an eye toward streamlining and refining the budgeting process, and to work with a consultant in reviewing human resources and management, with attention to recruitment and diversity of staff.

In her inaugural address, Easterling pledged to "work swiftly, creatively and tenaciously" to fulfill that mission. "We will do whatever it takes."

Easterling said she would have a series of specific reforms to submit to the council at its meeting in September. "We will work to achieve greater federation efficiency, better-managed finances and, most of all, outstanding affiliate services."

Donahue vowed that he and Easterling "will bring to our jobs the same dedication as the members of our unions bring to their jobs every day in every part of the economy." Workers, he said, are the nation's "most important investors, for they invest themselves in the success of their workplace every day."

"As we look ahead, let us never lose sight of the fundamental and enduring ideal that is the reason for our being, the purpose of all our effort and all our struggles," he said. "We believe that the working men and women who create the wealth, who contribute their mind and muscle and imagination, deserve respect in the workplace and a fair share of the wealth they produce.

"Above all else, as president I will stand for their rights, and we will demand an economy that puts people first — not just in rhetoric, but in results. It is time for this nation to understand once again that it is workers and not Wall Street who are truly responsible for the productivity and prosperity of America."

Meeting reporters for the first time as president of the AFL-CIO, Donahue promised an aggressive public campaign to "make labor's voice a part of America's daily conversation." He said he would be available to the media not only in press conferences, "but in my office, on the phone, maybe occasionally in the bar, or almost any place you are willing to listen to me and allow me to speak on behalf of America's working families."

Condemning the Republicans' assault on worker health and safety, education, job training, child labor protections and workers' democratic rights, he proclaimed that "it is our job to make the voice of working families heard on these issues and to make certain that working men and women hold accountable those who are pushing the Contract on Working Americans."

"We must also make clear to America our view that, in the end, we only serve our members' interests by improving the whole of our society," Donahue told union leaders at his installation. "We are, and must be understood to be, an important progressive force contributing essentially to the forward progress of the nation.

"We must put our shoulder to the national wheel and in concert with all like-minded Americans restore greatness and decency to this land. Not just by making the nation competitive, but far more importantly, by making it caring."

AFL-CIO pledges campaign to free Harry Wu

The AFL-CIO is urging all its affiliates to join the federation in a nationwide grass-roots effort to free human rights activist Harry Wu, an American citizen jailed in China.

"Harry Wu has long campaigned for the freedom of others. It is our turn to campaign for his freedom," the Executive Council said. Wu survived 19 years in China's forced labor camps, known as laogai, and has dedicated his life to exposing the system. He was arrested June 19 by the Chinese government and charged with espionage.

The council noted that "Wu is a close friend of the AFL-CIO." In 1990, Wu prepared and the AFL-CIO published the first map of laogai camp locations throughout China. Wu received the federation's Food and Allied Services Trade Department's special Worker Award.

"He is the world's most important voice for those he calls the 'millions of faceless and nameless ordinary people' who are victims of the Chinese government's violation of its citizens' most basic human rights," the statement said. It called on President Clinton and Secretary of State Warren Christopher to "do everything in their power to obtain Harry Wu's immediate release."

Organizing is priority No. 1

Continued from Page 5

among organizing and servicing members. The locals in Ohio, Kentucky and West Virginia are adding nearly 1,000 new members each year, Bensinger pointed out.

"We need to look to the past," he said, "at how the building trades in the '30s and '40s spent a lot of money to organize, for example, all the carpenters in a particular place. We need to run bigger and bolder organizing drives, with multiunion-based innovation and creativity. That's how we should go after nursing homes."

The key to expanding union membership, he said, "is to develop organizing infrastructure — resources, staff and lead organizers. It will take an enormous amount of money, which will require a massive shifting of resources from servicing to organizing."

Donahue noted that "there is a clear consensus to grow the institute. But you can't recruit people until you have the campaigns to put them into."

To encourage the development of a culture of organizing throughout labor, the committee recommended passage of a 1993 convention resolution, The Responsibility to Organize, which calls for an increased AFL-CIO role in organizing and which had raised the questions that President Lane Kirkland had sought to answer with the appointment of the Norton committee last year.

That resolution, No. 49, submitted by SEIU, urged that organizing activities "be integrated into the day-to-day life of local unions. Unions must create 'organizing committees' at all levels, but particularly at the local level, where members and leaders plan, debate and implement organizing plans."

The resolution called for the AFL-CIO to stoke this activity by creating the organizing fund and by expanding the role and funding of the Organizing Institute, as well as using the Labor Institute of Public Affairs to promote organizing.

SEIU President John J. Sweeney praised Bensinger's and Porter's work, calling the institute "one of our success stories" and urging more unions to participate in the program.

Regional organizing committees studied

Chicago

Six cooperative organizing committees are serving as an AFL-CIO laboratory for the study of improving coordination and cooperation among organizers.

The cooperative organizing committees are in Los Angeles, Chicago, Florida, Indiana, Kentucky/Ohio and Texas.

The AFL-CIO Organizing and Field Services Department is nearing completion of the review, designed to reveal if cooperative organizing has been effective in stimulating member growth, settling internal mediation disputes and combining resources, strategies and tactics.

"This study and survey will serve as a vital document in refining the co-ops as platforms from which special projects can be planned, launched and supported," Service Employees President John J. Sweeney, chair of the organization and field services committee, reported to the Executive Council.

The report noted that the ad hoc committee on the role of the federation in organizing, headed by President James J. Norton of the Graphic Communications Union, is focusing on a coordinated organizing program called the Los Angeles Manufacturing Action Project (LAMAP).

LAMAP is an amalgam of nine unions — the UAW, Carpenters, Food and Commercial Workers, UNITE, Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, Machinists, OCAW, Steelworkers and Teamsters — that are looking to organize among the 700,000 workers along a corridor that stretches from downtown L.A. to the ports of the city and Long Beach.

Affirmative action support reaffirmed

Chicago

Affirmative action has been good for America and will be needed so long as women and minorities suffer unfair disadvantage in the workplace and throughout society, the Executive Council declared during its summer meeting in Chicago.

Even though our society puts a high premium on equal opportunity, the AFL-CIO said, the reality is that African-Americans are unemployed at twice the rate of whites; women make only 72 percent as much as men; and last year, the federal government received more than 90,000 complaints of discrimination on the job.

The council pointed to the military as an example of an affirmative action program that works by providing a pool of qualified candidates for every promotion. The U.S. Education Department's programs targeted at minorities cost only about 40 cents for every $1,000 of student aid and have been an effective "ladder upwards for countless youths."

President Clinton's "strong, principled defense of affirmative action" drew praise. "We are encouraged by his presidential directive to reform its application in federal agencies; and we wholly agree with him that despite the hostile court rulings and the political opportunism of some, the job of affirmative action is indeed not yet done," the statement said.

After a review of federal affirmative action programs, Clinton directed departments to eliminate or reform any program that "creates a quota, creates preferences for unqualified individuals, creates reverse discrimination or continues even after its equal opportunity purposes have been achieved."

In two 5-4 votes, the U.S. Supreme Court held that federal affirmative action programs are subject to the same "strict scrutiny" that is applied to state and local programs, and dealt a blow to congressional districts created to ensure that African-Americans gain representation in Washington.

"There is no policy or program that can make a long historical legacy of discrimination disappear overnight," the council said. "But there is much evidence that affirmative action is one of the most effective, equitable ways to ensure that minorities and women have a fair chance."

Diversity panel reaches out to unions

Chicago

There is no panacea available to expand diversity in the labor movement, but there are many ideas every union can implement, according to a report by the AFL-CIO Full Participation Committee.

The committee sponsored workshops at four AFL-CIO regional conferences that explored both the extent of the problem and some potential solutions, said Government Employees President John N. Sturdivant, chair of the committee, in reporting to the Executive Council.

Workshop participants, mostly elected leaders, said they had encountered general apathy on the issue. But they concluded that more workers must "see themselves" in union activists and leaders if they are to have a sense of a personal stake in the union, Sturdivant reported.

AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue noted that the federation in the past 10 years has appointed 13 new department heads, half of whom were either women, minorities, or both. Among all new hires in the past two years, two-thirds are women or minorities.

"But it is clear that we must do more," he said, pointing to the regional conference workshops as "extraordinarily valuable in showing us how to move forward."

Workshop participants pointed to the value of unions reviewing their internal policies and practices, with an eye toward making them as open and inclusive as possible. Unions must also adopt policies to foster diversity in staff hiring for positions of responsibility.

Unions must provide more opportunities for participation at conferences, conventions and education programs to represent their unions throughout the labor movement, Sturdivant said.

The committee was created by President Lane Kirkland after a 1993 convention resolution called for the federation to find ways to achieve diversity.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Yokich replaces Bieber

The Executive Council welcomed a new member, President Stephen P. Yokich of the UAW, while praising his predecessor, former UAW President Owen Bieber.

Yokich was elected to head the UAW at its convention in July, when Bieber retired. The council noted that Bieber's leadership "has brought job and income security to hundreds of thousands of working women and men, and expanded its organizing and education programs."

Bieber had chaired the federation's Committee on Economic Policy and the Committee on South Africa.

Mergers applauded

Two recent union mergers were approved by the council, which also heard from the presidents of three large industrial unions preparing to unite into a single more powerful union.

The merger of the Clothing and Textile Workers with the Ladies' Garment Workers, forming the 300,000-member UNITE, was approved, as was the merger of the Rubber Workers with the Steelworkers.

USWA President George Becker, UAW President Stephen Yokich and Machinists President George Kourpias also discussed how they agreed to build a 2 million-member organization, with the three unions uniting by the year 2000.

With the two mergers approved by the council, the federation now has 78 affiliates, down from 144 at the time of merger of the AFL and CIO.

Ethical practices studied

AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue appointed a committee to study the federation's ethical practices code, which was developed in the late 1950s, and to recommend how it might be updated. The AFL-CIO code was superseded by federal enactment of the 1959 Landrum-Griffith Act.

In his inaugural address, Donahue warned that "our adversaries will use any ethical blot to discredit the labor movement. The answer is not to tolerate corruption among ourselves but to eradicate it. We can't allow the work of so many to be sullied by so few."

Donahue appointed Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling to chair the committee, which will include Presidents Richard L. Trumka of the Mine Workers, George Kourpias of the Machinists, Frank Hanley of the Operating Engineers, Frank Hurt of the Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers, John N. Sturdivant of the Government Employees, Patricia Friend of the Flight Attendants and Edward J. Cleary of the New York AFL-CIO.

UBC in non-compliance

The council agreed that the Carpenters are in non-compliance with Article XX of the AFL-CIO Constitution for failing to keep its local at Hughes Aircraft in Newport Beach, Calif., from performing electronic maintenance work.

The council heard appeals from Carpenters President Sigurd Lucassen and Electrical Workers President John J. Barry before voting 15-10 not to restore Article XX rights to the UBC.

The council also approved the extension of the federation's policy that a union will not be in violation of Article XX if it goes forward with a representation election even after an unaffiliated union in that unit seeks affiliation with another affiliated union. The statement, approved for one year on May 6, 1992, was extended to May 30, 1996.

Cabotage laws backed

Congressional efforts to gut existing cabotage laws and open the domestic waterways to foreign companies displacing American workers drew labor's ire.

The Executive Council cautioned that "efforts to destroy the U.S. domestic transportation work force are being led and funded by American companies with foreign-flag shipping interests and foreign corporations anxious to move into the domestic transportation scene with foreign workers hired from the world's most exploitable pools of labor."

The council warned that eliminating cabotage laws, like the Jones Act, would invite foreign incursions into air, rail and trucking as well.

Phone pacts sealed, but Bell Atlantic hung up

By Colleen M. O'Neill

While Communications Workers at several "Baby Bells" are celebrating tentative agreements, CWA members at Bell Atlantic face the strong possibility of going out on strike in their effort to gain a fair contract.

Some 243,000 CWA workers in 41 states and the District of Columbia have been in negotiations, with Electrical Workers involved in several cases.

Six regional telephone operating companies began the month facing bargaining deadlines, with Ameritech, BellSouth, Southwestern Bell and Pacific Telesis reaching settlement by Aug. 10 on contracts mirroring last year's agreement between CWA and NYNEX.

That agreement with NYNEX — one of the weakest regional operating companies — set certain parameters that were followed in the national bargaining with AT&T, said CWA President Morton Bahr. The AT&T agreement was ratified by CWA and IBEW members as of Aug. 1.

The tentative contracts reached with the four regional companies feature wage increases between 10 percent and 11 percent, employment security improvements and no cost shifting in health care for active workers and retirees. With an agreement near at US WEST, Bahr said, "You have to ask yourself why Bell Atlantic" is refusing to make a serious attempt at a settlement.

Talks were held after the Aug. 5 contract expiration for Bell Atlantic workers, but the company refused to extend the contract, forcing employees in Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Washington, D.C., to work without a contract. Bell Atlantic and CWA remain far apart on a number of key issues.

"We hope there's no strike, but if there is, this union's resources will be committed to fighting for a fair, comparable contract," Bahr said.

Joining Bahr at the Aug. 10 news conference, CWA District 13 Vice President Vincent Maisano released a report detailing the declining service by Bell Atlantic, and he outlined a campaign of workplace actions, public protests, outreach to the news media and actions designed to have an impact on company revenue if Bell Atlantic "persists in acting as the renegade of the communications industry."

Ameritech, bargaining with 32,000 CWA members and 11,000 IBEW members in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan and Wisconsin, reached agreement late Aug. 10. Talks continued between CWA and US WEST, where the contract was set to expire at 12:01 a.m. Aug. 13.

Nearly 40,000 CWA members in South Dakota, Idaho, Utah, Colorado, Washington, New Mexico, Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, Nebraska, Oregon, Arizona, Wyoming and Montana work for US WEST.

In the bargaining with regional companies, Pacific Telesis and 35,000 CWA members in Nevada and California reached a tentative agreement Aug. 8. Earlier, on Aug. 7, 39,000 CWA members in Texas, Arkansas, Missouri, Oklahoma and Kansas reached a tentative agreement with Southwestern Bell.

BellSouth workers in Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee, Louisiana and Alabama also reached a tentative agreement Aug. 8. All of the tentative contracts are subject to ratification by CWA members.

The employment security clauses of the contracts are important, noted CWA spokesman Jeff Miller, given the climate of this round of bargaining.

CWA members are bargaining "against the backdrop of telecommunications deregulation bills and the prospect that companies are going to move into these new areas," Miller said. "Companies are downsizing core telephone businesses and plowing extra money into acquisitions and mergers and new ventures.

"Emphasizing employment security means making sure our members have access to new jobs and the union has a fair chance to organize the new entities."

USAir unions nix concessions as airline profits rise

By David Kameras

USAir broke off early contract talks aimed at gaining concessions from its unions after earnings reports showed renewed profitability, thus diminishing worker interest in the givebacks.

The first shot was fired by the Flight Attendants, who turned down a package of concessions. Tentative agreements had been reached with the Air Line Pilots and the Machinists. The airline had sought to cut $500 million from its annual labor costs, offering in return an equity stake, board membership and profit-sharing.

AFA members voted by a 55 percent margin to reject the $52.6 million in givebacks, which would have required an immediate 4.95 percent cut in pay and elimination of a 4 percent raise scheduled for January 1996.

USAir has been crying poverty for several years and, indeed, had seemed near insolvency. But the carrier showed second-quarter net income of nearly $113 million, its best performance in six years, raising doubts as to whether labor concessions are necessary.

In other industry developments:

● A Flight Attendant fired by USAir Shuttle for tending to a sick child has been ordered reinstated with full pay.

Tina Miller-Silverman, a 25-year veteran of the shuttle route, was unable to arrange for emergency child care after learning that her child was ill. Although other flight attendants offered to serve in her place, management let her go for refusing to work overtime.

"An attendant who learns that her child is ill and may not be attended should be considered in the same category as being ill and properly relieved of completing her sequence," ruled Milton Rubin, the arbitrator appointed by the National Mediation Board, and he denied that Miller-Silverman "did such wrong as to require any discipline."

Rubin called her May 1994 firing "not for just cause," and complained of "a rigid and unyielding recitation of contractual positions."

"It is important in today's working world that companies come to an understanding of the sometimes conflicting demands of work and family," said AFA President Patricia Friend. Some 85 percent of AFA's membership is women, many of them working moms.

● ALPA has filed suit against Delta Air Lines to block a shift of some jet operations to Delta Connection commuter carriers. The union says the switch would violate Delta's obligation "to maintain the status quo" during ongoing negotiations involving federal mediation.



APALA photo

APALA President Kent Wong and Rep. Nydia Velazquez (D-N.Y.) listen at APALA's convention as Rep. Patsy Mink (D-Hawaii) describes the new congressional assaults on workers.

APALA vows fight for immigrants

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

Delegates to the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance convention in New York City heard a call to the barricades to defend against Republican attacks on workers in general and immigrants in particular.

And they also heard from AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue and Service Employees President John J. Sweeney on the importance of organizing in unions to build a mighty weapon of defense for all workers.

The Senate is poised to vote on welfare reform legislation that includes severe anti-immigrant provisions denying benefits to legal immigrants even after they become American citizens, APALA President Kent Wong told the convention.

The Senate may also drastically limit legal immigration, which would prevent more than a million Asian Pacific family members from reuniting.

"Asian Pacific Americans are the fastest growing ethnic group in the country, and two-thirds are immigrants," Wong said. "So when Congress is attacking immigrant rights, they are attacking our rights."

Reps. Patsy Mink (D-Hawaii) and Nydia Velazquez (D-N.Y.) reiterated the importance of APALA and the entire labor movement working together to fight the Republican congressional majority on the massive budget cuts, divisive rhetoric and their plans to sever 60 years of progressive social legislation.

The delegates also marched to Times Square, where they joined local Asian Pacific Americans in a vocal rally for immigrant rights, then proceeded to the Marriot Marquis to protest its long history of discrimination against pro-union workers.

Attacks on women and people of color via the challenge to affirmative action is an affront to the civil rights workers fought for decades to attain, said AFL-CIO Vice President Gloria Johnson, president of the Coalition of Labor Union Women.

"For centuries, American ideals of equality, opportunity and fair play have been confounded by the politics and practices of division and exclusion," AFL-CIO Director of Civil Rights Richard Womack reminded the delegates.

"As the work force changes, we have a moral duty to change with it," Donahue told the convention in his first appearance after his Aug. 1 election.

"So as the working population becomes more Asian Pacific American, our movement must reflect that fact. Every Asian Pacific American worker must feel that she or he has a home in the AFL-CIO."

Also pointing to the importance of organizing and diversity, Sweeney said, "The AFL-CIO has the responsibility of providing leadership and resources for a massive wave of organizing and restoring the American dream for millions of working families. And I believe that's particularly true when it comes to organizing the new work force, which is increasingly people of color."

Other speakers included Dennis Hayashi, civil rights director for the Department of Health and Human Services, and Karen Nussbaum, director of the Labor Department's Women's Bureau.

UNION NEWS

Union faces changing times

Facing increasing job loss due to outsourcing and technology, the Plate Printers, Die Stampers and Engravers used its convention in Philadelphia June 11-17, to devise strategies to save jobs.

"The trade is quickly dying," said Secretary-Treasurer James L. Kopernick. Of particular concern is the use of new technology that eliminates the need for the union's members who print securities, federal food stamps, legal currency and postage stamps.

The delegates passed resolutions to lobby against the proposed $1 coin and to try to prevent any more states from implementing the food stamp electronic debit card system.

They also decried the new book entry system for registering securities that does not require a printed document, and urged the Postal Service to stop sending part of its business for the printing of postage stamps to non-union companies.

The delegates re-elected all the union's top officers, including President Daniel J. Bradley, Kopernick, Vice Presidents Glenn Bow and Ken Johnson and International Safety Officer William Brabitz.

Idaho wage floor pushed

Delegates to the Idaho AFL-CIO convention urged a $2 increase in the minimum wage by the year 2000, then began circulating petitions to get the issie on the 1996 ballot.

The convention also re-elected Randall Ambuehl and Charles Vogel as president and secretary-treasurer, respectively.

The ballot petition seeks to increase the state's minimum wage from $4.25 per hour to $4.75 on July 1, 1997; $5.25 per hour on July 1, 1999; and $6.25 per hour on July 1, 2000.

Delegates also passed resolutions defending the 40-hour workweek and urging repeal of so-called "right-to-work" laws in the state.

Speakers included Republican Gov. Phil Batt and Roger Madson, director of the Idaho Department of Employment.

UFW, Nash de Camp talk

Farm Workers, protesting a no-talk policy and other unfair labor practices at the Nash de Camp Vineyards in California, met with officers of the Minnesota-based company.

Joined by a delegation from the Minnesota State AFL-CIO, the Minnesota Food Association and the Presbyterian Church, the union requested the company retract its ban on table-grape workers talking to each other while on the job. They also asked Nash de Camp to give workers protective gloves, and to stop stalling in contract talks.

The company denied it had a no-talk policy. The UFW said the company also has poor working conditions, pointing to more than 50 unfair labor practice charges filed against it last year. The union has sought a new contract with Nash de Camp since 1985.

Garment firms to cooperate

Garment firms in Los Angeles agreed to police contractors for violations of the law, and California and New York labor commissioners signed an accord to share industry data.

Some 21 major Los Angeles-area garment manufacturers signed an agreement to boost industry compliance with the minimum wage, overtime, record-keeping and other requirements under the Fair Labor Standards Act.

In exchange, the Labor Department's Wage and Hour Division has agreed to delay initiating litigation against a manufacturer or contractor found in violation of the law for five days to give the firm an opportunity to correct the problem.

Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich said the agreement creates the largest force ever assembled to ensure compliance with federal labor laws.

Meanwhile, New York State Labor Commissioner John E. Sweeney and California Labor Commissioner Victoria L. Bradshaw agreed to share information about the enforcement of labor laws, as well as apparel transportation, retailing and the general economic condition of the industry.

Jobs picture still mostly cloudy

By David Kameras

July data proved once again that American workers are not sharing in the nation's prosperity.

The unemployment rate rose to 5.7 percent, a modest 0.1 percentage-point increase from June. However, manufacturing lost 85,000 jobs, bringing the total to 188,000 since April.

"The overall situation is still one of stagnant income and slow job growth," said AFL-CIO economist Frank Parente. "If there is a resurgence in the economy now under way, it is not visible in the employment report."

The decline in manufacturing jobs was broad, Parente indicated. "Among durables, the largest decline occurred in transportation equipment, where the decrease of 20,000 reflected temporary shutdowns in the motor vehicle industry and further cutbacks in aircraft manufacturing. Aircraft has lost nearly 40 percent of its employment over the last five years."

The trend in aerospace is not likely to change anytime soon. The Economic Policy Institute reports that without a change in government policy, "up to 469,000 U.S. jobs could be eliminated by 2013 because of offset policies and increased foreign competition. Most of these positions are in manufacturing or closely related high-skill, high-wage service industries."

Study authors Randy Barber and Robert E. Scott suggested a number of steps to boost aircraft employment, including creation of a White House-level interagency task force, promotion of employment and production, and negotiation of fair trade pacts through the World Trade Organization.

"The U.S. cannot afford to lose jobs that built the aerospace industry, nor can it afford to lose the industrial base necessary to produce advanced aircraft essential to national security," they said. "If acted on immediately, these steps would greatly enhance the prospects for retaining and rebuilding a strong aerospace industry in the United States and the high-wage, high-skill jobs that go with it."

The drop in manufacturing was sharp enough to punch a huge hole in the 144,000 new service jobs in July. In addition to aircraft, small job losses were recorded in most other durable goods. Sizable declines also took place in apparel, textiles, chemicals and rubber and plastics, with only electronics showing a sustained job-growth trend. In all, 1.2 million manufacturing jobs have been lost since 1989.

In addition to the 7.6 million officially unemployed, 1.6 million unsuccessfully searched for work and 4.4 million who wanted full-time jobs had to work part time. That brought the total to 13.6 million affected by partial or total unemployment.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 7.8 million of those who do work, 6.1 percent, have two or more jobs to put food on the table. Average weekly factory overtime increased to 4.3 hours in July. Not surprisingly, a Georgia State University study indicates that workers have lost an hour of leisure time a week since the 1980s.

Of 11 large states, unemployment increased in California (7.6 percent to 7.9 percent), Illinois (4.1 percent to 5.1 percent), Massachusetts (5.6 percent to 5.7 percent), New Jersey (6.6 percent to 6.8 percent), New York (5.9 percent to 6.2 percent) and Ohio (4.8 percent to 4.9 percent). It improved in Florida (5.3 percent to 5.2 percent), Michigan (6.2 percent to 5.1 percent), North Carolina (4.4 percent to 4 percent), Pennsylvania (6.2 percent to 5.4 percent) and Texas (6.3 percent to 6 percent).

DATA

Unemployment Rate	
July	5.7 percent
June	5.6 percent
Factory Orders	
June	-0.2 percent
Index of Leading Indicators	
June	+0.2 percent
Gross Domestic Product (Annualized)	
Second Quarter	+0.5 percent

Commuter rail dispute goes to board

President Clinton has set up a second presidential emergency board in an attempt to resolve a stalemate between some 4,900 workers and Metro-North Railroad Co.

But the Locomotive Engineers and Teamsters Local 808 joined the United Transportation Union in challenging the legality of the board, saying the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which operates Metro-North, waited too long to make its request.

The White House action took place after members of the Machinists and the Firemen and Oilers voted down tentative settlements that would have tied 10 percent wage increases over four years to work-rule changes that could have reduced their income. Tentative pacts with the Transport Workers and the Sheet Metal Workers also were pending.

National Mediation Board Chairman Ernest DuBester joined in talks July 13, two days before 17 unions would have been free to strike and management could unilaterally impose terms. However, the negotiations quickly went into recess, and with creation of the new emergency board, both sides must maintain the status quo until 60 days after the board makes its recommendations to the president.

The MTA has proposed scheduling off-peak track work without paying overtime for nights and weekend work, and is resisting demands for a three-year contract. Labor also has insisted on wage parity with workers at the Long Island Railroad, which is also operated by MTA.

New York Gov. George E. Pataki (R) has indicated that failure to reach an accord would mean Congress should remove commuter railroads from protection under the Railway Labor Act.

Recent progress in the negotiations apparently forestalled a Pataki-requested hearing on the dispute that had been scheduled by the House Transportation and Infrastructure subcommittee on railroads, a development Michael Doyle, BLE general chairman, called "a sign of good faith from the governor's office."

Tentative settlements for the 1992-94 contract period have been reached with the Railroad Signalmen, the Teamsters and the unaffiliated American Railway Supervisors Association.

Metro-North is the nation's second-largest commuter railroad.

Meanwhile, clerical and carmen local officials of the Transportation Communications Union voted 403-2 to authorize a strike, reflecting the lack of progress in contract talks in the nine months since Section 6 notices were served on railroads involved in national negotiations. The union also has asked for a release from federal mediation, a preliminary step toward a legal strike.

"It is obscene that the carriers refuse to negotiate while they fatten their coffers with profits and merger-driven stock mania," said TCU International President Robert A. Scardelletti. "The time has come to move our fight for a good contract to the next stage."

In a related development, a congressman who controls the purse-strings for the national passenger rail network has threatened to begin "the planning process for the liquidation of Amtrak."

Bud Shuster (R-Pa.), chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and author of an earlier draft bill that would have stripped labor protections already codified in existing collective bargaining agreements, canceled consideration of a bill to reauthorize the carrier, claiming that rail labor had reneged on a compromise alternative.

But ranking Democrat Norman Mineta of California countered that the sticking point was one of "an unanswered question of interpretation," because the compromise posed a risk of undoing labor protections for freight rail workers governed by the Interstate Commerce Commission. "A statement clarifying the intent of the legislation would have resolved the issue, but that statement was not forthcoming from the bill's authors."

Such a clarification was contained in an amendment planned by Rep. William Lipinski (D-Ill.), but he was prevented from offering the measure when the markup was canceled.

As an alternative threat to "liquidation," Shuster indicated he may bring up his original anti-labor bill, which would slash severance pay and give a green light to contracting out.

—David Kameras

NEWSMAKERS

AFL-CIO President **Tom Donahue** named **Gerald M. Shea** as his executive assistant, **Susan Dunlop** as an assistant to the president and **Candice Johnson** to the new post of AFL-CIO press secretary.

Shea, 48, has worked as Donahue's executive assistant in the secretary-treasurer's office since May 1994 after coming to the federation as director of employee benefits in September 1993. Previously, he headed government affairs for the Service Employees, where he began his career in 1972, organizing hospital workers in Massachusetts.

Dunlop, 48, has been an assistant to the president since 1985. Dunlop is a former AFL-CIO News assistant editor and previously served as the assistant to the secretary-treasurer in the Union Label and Service Trades Department.

Two other assistants to President **Lane Kirkland** moved to new posts. **Jim Baker** will coordinate the affairs of the international institutes (**See story, Page 7**), and **David St. John** stepped down from his AFL-CIO post to serve as communications director of the Donahue-Easterling campaign.

Johnson, 39, has been with the AFL-CIO Information Department since 1983, first as an assistant editor of the AFL-CIO News, and more recently doubling as a news media spokesperson. Johnson also has worked for the Building and Construction Trades Department in Washington, as an organizer for the Ladies' Garment Workers and on the staff of the Service Employees and at the U.S. Department of Labor.

Secretary-Treasurer **Barbara Easterling** named **Arleen F. Gilliam**, 46, as her executive assistant. Gilliam has worked in the secretary-treasurer's office as director for budget, planning and personnel policy since 1984. She came to the AFL-CIO as a specialist on workers' compensation and unemployment insurance after working at the Labor Department.

Robert J. Pleasure, executive director of the George Meany Center for Labor Studies, was elected to the Industrial Relations Research Association Executive Board for a three-year term beginning January 1996.

Steve Protulis has been named executive director of the National Council of Senior Citizens, replacing retiring director **Larry Smedley**. Protulis began his career on the assembly line with UAW Local 174 and moved up to become an administrative assistant in the UAW president's office. Most recently, he was with the AFL-CIO Committee on Political Education as coordinator for support groups and union retiree groups. Smedley also is an alumnus of the AFL-CIO who went to NCSC from the federation's Social Security Department.

Byron Charlton has been named interim director of the African American Labor Center, replacing Patrick O'Farrell, who retired July 31. Charlton has been an AFL-CIO legislative representative specializing in international affairs.

National Labor Relations Board General Counsel **Fred Feinstein** has appointed **Linda R. Sher** as the board's associate general counsel for enforcement and **Jospeh F. Frankl** as assistant general counsel.

Susan King, executive director of the Commission on Family and Medical Leave, has been nominated as the Labor Department's assistant secretary for public affairs. King would replace **Anne Lewis**, who will head the agency's policy office. King was a broadcast journalist for 20 years.



Gerald M. Shea



Arleen F. Gilliam



Susan Dunlop



Candice Johnson

DEATH

Murray H. Finley, longtime president of the Clothing and Textile Workers and first chairman of the AFL-CIO Executive Council's strategic approaches committee, died from leukemia in Michigan. He was 73.

Finley, who retired in 1987, became president of the Clothing Workers in 1972, helped put together the 1976 merger with the Textile Workers and served as ACTWU president for 11 years. He served as manager of the Chicago Joint Board of the union from 1961 to 1972.

He began his career with the UAW in the 1940s. Following his military service, he became the assistant regional attorney for the Clothing Workers. Under his guidance, the union organized one of labor's most celebrated successes — the long nationwide boycott of giant J.P. Stevens.

"Throughout his lifetime, Murray earned the highest regard for his tireless devotion to his union and his unflagging commitment to the best interests of working men and women and their families," said AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue.

As an AFL-CIO vice president, Finley directed the support effort on behalf of striking USX workers in 1986. That campaign, plus the work on behalf of the National Football League Players Association the following year, put the AFL-CIO in a coordinated strike support role.

Finley is survived by his wife, two daughters, a niece that the couple raised, and three grandchildren.

CORRECTIONS

During the UTU convention July 17-21, M.B. Futhey Jr. defeated J.L. Easley for vice president. B.A. Boyd was elected assistant president by acclamation.

The following corrects the status of state legislation included in the special section July 31:

- In New York, action is still pending on the renewal of agency shop.
- In Rhode Island, legislation to increase the wage threshold for Davis-Bacon passed in the House but died in the Senate.
- In Utah, legislation that forbade municipalities and school districts from enacting their own Davis-Bacon laws was enacted.
- In Texas, dues check-off for Fire Fighters died late in the session.
- In Pennsylvania, legislation to repeal agency fair-share fees included state employees.
- In New Hampshire, right-to-work legislation was defeated in the Senate.
- Kansas repealed its Davis-Bacon law in 1987.
- In Arizona, committees killed legislation to reinstate Davis-Bacon.

— Compiled by Muriel H. Cooper

ORGANIZING

Council hears of wins

Recent organizing victories by AFL-CIO affiliates, reported to the Executive Council by Organizing Committee Chairman John J. Sweeney, president of the Service Employees, include:

- The Communications Workers gained 623 workers in a card check at the AT&T Guilford Center in Greensboro, N.C., a result made possible by a national agreement between CWA and AT&T.
- The Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers won a unit of 188 at Campagna-Turano Baking Co. in Berwyn, Ill.
- The Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers organized the employees at Louisiana Pigman Co., a chloride-processing plant.
- The 400 flight attendants at ValueJet voted for representation with AFA.
- The Teamsters won an election among 150 workers at National Waste Disposal, Inc. in Trenton, N.J.
- The Electrical Workers won a bargaining unit of 118 at the Jefferson Electric Membership Corp. in Louisville, Ga.
- AFT won an election at the Bank State College Faculty in New York.
- AFSCME organized 100 workers in a residential facility for the mentally handicapped in Yonkers, N.Y.
- Workers at the Glacier Vanderbell Co. in Ohio voted for the UAW.
- The Steelworkers will represent 450 UNARCO Commercial Products workers in Wagoner, Okla.
- Workers at the Northwest Health Care Center in Milwaukee voted for the SEIU.
- The Food and Commercial Workers organized 425 workers at Green Acres Poultry plant in Nacogdoches, Texas.
- The Plumbers and Pipe Fitters organized 39 workers at Grinnell Fire Protection System in Esther, N.H.
- UNITE won an election among 70 workers at Thermal Dimension in Illinois.
- One hundred workers at COMCO Plastic in New York voted for the Machinists.
- The Carpenters organized 206 workers at Valley Manufacturing Housing in Sunnyside, Wash.
- Graphic Communications won an election at Dale Business Forms in Missouri.
- The Operating Engineers organized workers at Riverside Cement in California.
- The Paperworkers won an election at Universal Converter in Oconto Falls, Wis.
- The Sheet Metal Workers organized workers at Denler Metal Products in New York.

Newspaper all union

The Watsonville, Calif., Register-Pajaronian became a wall-to-wall union shop when two units voted for representation by the San Jose Newspaper Guild. The vote was 19-11 in advertising and editorial and 14-6 in the mailroom.

Pressroom employees are represented by the Graphic Communications Union.

Skyway flies with ALPA

A majority of 58 of the 101 eligible Skyway Airlines pilots voted for the Air Line Pilots at the end of what organizers called an aggressive anti-union campaign by the company.

Skyway, a regional carrier based in Milwaukee, is a subsidiary of Midwest Express.

RESOURCES

LABOR STUDIES

AIDS in the Workplace Institute, sponsored by the George Meany Center for Labor Studies, will be held Oct. 1-6 at the center, 10000 New Hampshire Ave., Silver Spring, Md. Contact Brenda R. Moon at 202/637-5331.

The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service is seeking presentations on labor-management cooperative efforts for their **Eighth National Labor-Management Conference** next year in Chicago. Contact the FMCS at 202/606-8181 for a copy of the formal call for presentations. Submissions must be received by Sept. 30.

Empire State College in New York is offering **Theories of the Labor Movement** through its distance learning program, which allows study from home. Registration deadline is Sept. 15. Contact Professor Clark Everling at 212/647-7812.

The George Meany Center for Labor Studies is offering 24 courses ranging from organizing to how to use the latest information technology. For a copy of the Fall Semester brochure, contact the registration office at 301/431-5422 or FAX 301/431-5411.

FILMS

Ties That Bind, a one-hour documentary by We Do the Work, examines the obstacles faced by working people who try to exercise their democratic rights to form unions. The documentary will air on Public Broadcasting System stations on Labor Day, Sept. 4. Check your local listings for station and time.

There is a nationwide Labor Day initiative to "Link the Community to the Classroom" with screenings of **The Uprising of '34**, the documentary on the General Textile Strike of 1934. The film is available for rental for $50. For information on organizing or participating in a screening, call 800/786-1767.

'Little Davis-Bacon' under siege

Prevailing wage merits ignored in statehouses

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

Republican victories in 1994 have brought an escalated campaign by state legislators and governors to repeal one of the nation's first fair-wage standards — state prevailing wage laws.

State prevailing wage laws require contractors on federally funded construction projects to pay their workers no less than the wage rates that prevail in the local area on the same type of construction.

According to a preliminary mid-year survey of state AFL-CIOs by the federation's Office of State Government Liaison (OSGL), states considering repealing or amending their "Little Davis-Bacon" laws in 1995 include Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Indiana, Maine, Maryland, Missouri, New Mexico, Illinois, Ohio, Minnesota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Utah, Rhode Island and Washington.

"From the statehouses to the U.S. Congress, Republican leadership is out to smash our unions," said Mike Gildea, director in the AFL-CIO Office of State Government Liaison. "With worker wages and benefits already in a free fall, they're attacking fair-wage laws, while CEOs record obscene pay increases and corporate profits hit record levels."

State legislators have attacked prevailing wage laws in a number of ways, including proposals to:

- Dramatically increase the dollar threshold below which construction contracts are exempt from prevailing wage application.
- Completely exempt all repair, remodeling and rehabilitation contracts.
- Exclude local government and school construction projects even though they may be subsidized by the state.

A law was enacted in Utah that forbids municipalities and school districts from enacting their own prevailing wage standards.

Similarly, in Indiana, despite all-out resistance by labor, amendments were rammed through to weaken the 1935 state law. The Indiana legislation has been overturned in court.

A Michigan judge ruled in late 1994 that the state's prevailing wage was unconstitutional. A similar district court ruling also occurred in Oklahoma. Both decisions are being appealed.

But worker forces have fought back to counter attacks in Montana, Oregon and New York. "The Republicans have started to feel the strength of our resistance," said AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department President Robert A. Georgine.

In Washington state, hundreds of building trades workers attended a House subcommittee work session on Davis-Bacon repeal, Georgine noted, letting lawmakers know that the "anti-union bill that cuts wages for middle-class Americans would not go unnoticed."

Meanwhile, the Delaware state legislature passed a law requiring prevailing wages for emergency workers. Legislation to reinstate Kansas' prevailing wage law is pending action in the legislature's 1996 session. In Arizona, legislation to reinstate the prevailing wage law was killed in committee.

In Wyoming, a pro-labor amendment to the state's existing prevailing wage law was enacted.

A major offensive against these laws came during the Reagan-Bush era, when federal and state labor standards generally were under widespread attack. Nine state legislatures repealed their laws during this time.

A University of Utah study, "Losing Ground: Lessons from the Repeal of Nine 'Little Davis-Bacon' Acts," shows the high price this anti-worker war has exacted. The nine states, and the years of the repeals, were Alabama (1980), Arizona (1984), Colorado (1985), Florida (1979), Idaho (1985), New Hampshire (1985), Kansas (1987), Louisiana (1988) and Utah (1981).

The study found plummeting wages, massive cost overruns, an increase in on-the-job injuries, plunging state tax receipts and falling training rates. Average annual construction worker income fell from $24,317 to $22,482, a 7.5 percent pay cut.

As workers' wages decrease, so do the taxes paid to state and federal governments. Utah lost $3 million in income and sales taxes each year following repeal of its state prevailing wage law in 1981. Overall, the study concluded, Utah lost far more than it saved in the years since repeal.

Since lower-wage workers with less training tend to have more injuries, on-the-job injury rates also increased by an average of 15 percent after repeal.

While the dollar amount of the bid proposals for state contracts decreased, these savings were overwhelmed by much higher cost overruns, the study found. Overruns went from an average of 2 percent before repeal to 7.3 percent afterwards.

Repeals have been devastating

The effect of state repeals also was devastating to construction industry training and skills development programs. Overall, training rates fell by an astounding 40 percent, the report states. Moreover, minority participation in apprenticeship programs dropped even further.

Without prevailing wage laws and the unions that provide apprenticeship training, the study concludes, "it is unclear how or whether the market will regularly and carefully train workers, assure safe working conditions, provide training opportunities particularly for minority workers, or offer the income levels necessary to make construction an attractive career."

The origin of what is commonly known as Davis-Bacon laws dates back to 1891, when Kansas adopted the nation's first prevailing wage statute. At least eight other states passed similar legislation before the first prevailing wage legislation was even introduced in the U.S. Congress. Hearings for a federal prevailing wage law began in 1927 but the legislation, named after Republicans James J. Davis and Robert L. Bacon, did not pass until 1931.

Legislation to repeal the federal Davis-Bacon Act has been approved by GOP-controlled committees in the House and Senate, but Democrats in the Senate say they will filibuster any bill that reaches the floor.

Prevailing wage laws have drawn praise from a number of state and municipal executives, including the Republican mayor of Los Angeles, Richard G. Riordan.

"Prevailing wage laws . . . have attracted skilled labor with expertise and experience to complete projects on time and within budget," Riordan said in a statement entered into the Congressional Record by Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) "Those inside the Washington Beltway who would eliminate Davis-Bacon are shortsighted in their thinking."

IBEW protects Westinghouse pensioners

The Electrical Workers successfully lobbied for significant safeguards in changes proposed for more than 12,000 participants of the Westinghouse Electric Corp. pension plan.

The Department of Labor's Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration granted a waiver to the company June 26 to allow it to include "alternative investments" of employer-owned securities, but with four IBEW-suggested caveats to protect those receiving pensions.

Alternative investments, as defined by the Department of Labor, generally include "illiquid investments in an asset class other than traditional classes of cash, stock, fixed-income securities and real estate."

"We are very pleased that the Department of Labor has seen fit to adopt our recommendations in granting this exemption," said IBEW President John J. Barry. "We believe that the points we raised constitute a wise and prudent course for the Westinghouse pension plan, and we hope that this exemption marks the first step in the process that brings the plan back to a healthy and responsible level of funding."

In comments prepared last December on the proposed exemption, the union urged the department to make mandatory Westinghouse's reimbursement obligation for any lessening in value of the contributed securities, rather than solely at the discretion of Mellon Bank, the independent investment manager.

Secondly, IBEW asked for clarification of Mellon's fiduciary responsibilities under the terms of the Employment Retirement Income Security Act.

Also, IBEW argued that the "make-whole" period of responsibility for Westinghouse should be extended from three years to eight to 10 years, thus covering entirely the time span during which the securities could be offered for sale.

Finally, the union recommended that alternative investments in the Westinghouse pension plan not exceed 5.2 percent of assets, which is consistent with the plan's own asset allocation guide.

AFL-CIO NEWS

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EXECUTIVE COUNCIL



AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue and Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling hit the ground running after their elections. **(See Story, Page 1).**

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6 *Sweeney challenge set for convention*

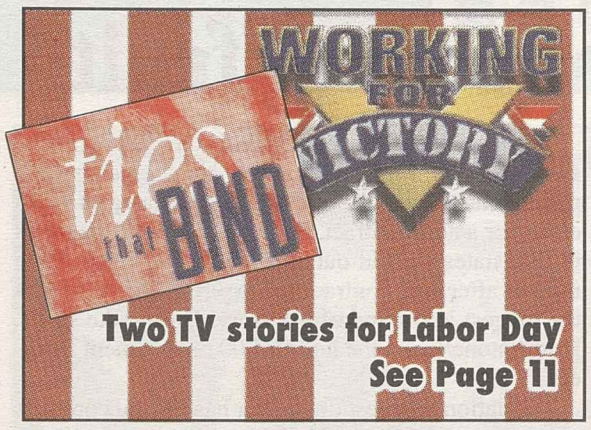
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UNION YES

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AFL-CIO NEWS

VOLUME 40, NUMBER 18

AUGUST 28, 1995

Ads confront Congress with budget horror

By Colleen M. O'Neill

Republican lawmakers who voted to cut worker programs and protections are being smacked with radio and television commercials in their home districts that challenge their service to constituents.

The $1 million advertising campaign, unveiled at a news conference Aug. 21 by AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue, complements the work of trade unionists in 36 congressional districts in an intensive summer recess lobbying effort under the federation's Stand UP banner.

Rallies, town forums, protests, legislative action committee meetings and news conferences were held in 12 congressional districts in addition to the 24 districts where ads were placed, Donahue said. He described the campaign as workers and their unions "turning up the heat" on a Republican-controlled Congress intent on wiping out job safety and health, pension and labor law protections.

"Stand UP for America's Working Families is the AFL-CIO's national effort to expose those Republican votes against workers and against America's families, and in favor of their rich friends," he said. "It's our campaign to let the American people know the truth about what the Republicans are doing in Washington, and what else they have planned.

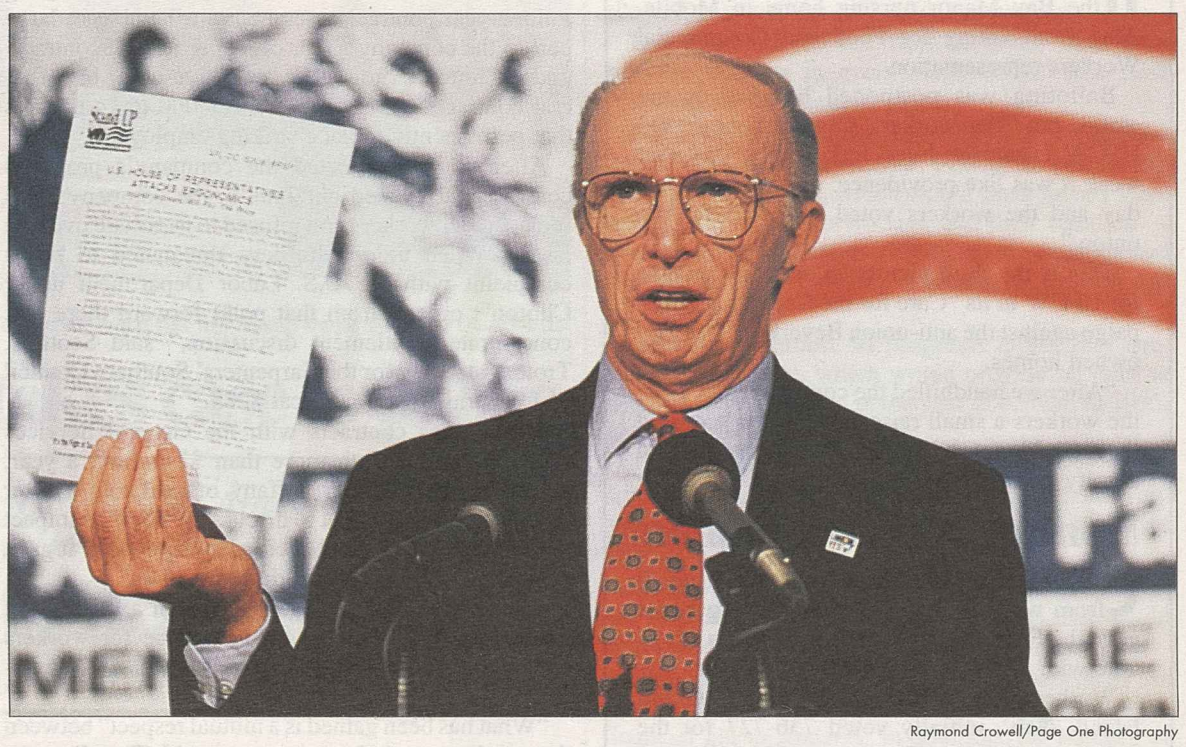
"Over the next 15 months, working men and women are going to continue to hold their elected officials accountable for every vote, for every position, for every attack on workers' families," Donahue vowed.

"Our LACs (legislative action committees) have been asking for meetings with members of Congress to talk through these issues, to meet one-on-one with a delegation of trade unionists," he said. "If the representative is not willing to meet, then obviously we have to resort to other ways of getting that message across, whether by leafleting outside the representative's office or by accosting him or her at town meetings.

"Whatever the way of communicating, it's important to get to them with the message of the horror they are bringing about with these kinds of votes."

Donahue released details of the radio and television ads, which tell the story of Patrick Hayes, a 19-year-old

Continued on Page 3



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue said the AFL-CIO will hold Congress accountable for anti-worker actions.

Labor Day a Stand UP occasion

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

Rather than resting on the laurels of labor's strong history, this Labor Day trade unionists will be standing up against the assault on worker rights.

AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue and Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling said in a joint statement that Labor Day "comes during a hard period for working people. For a generation, they have been getting poorer while the richest fifth of the population gets richer."

"Historically," they said, "the most reliable, effective way for working people to protect their best interests has been the trade union movement. That has never been truer than today. What that means is that the AFL-CIO has to fight harder and smarter for what we know is right, not only for our members but for all Americans who work for a living."

In that spirit, America's workers are forging ahead to preserve the tenets of the AFL-CIO's Stand UP campaign — a voice on the job, good jobs, good wages and worker protections.

Organized labor first set aside this special day in New York City back in 1882 to focus attention on issues similar to those in the Stand UP campaign — wages, education and the eight-hour work day. And more than a century later, the tradition lives on.

From New York to California, workers will be participating in parades, picnics, memorial dedications and numerous other activities. The trade unionists'

Continued on Page 9

Full-court press put on Detroit papers

Unions set mass rally, seek antitrust action

By James B. Parks

Organized labor is mobilizing in the streets and in the halls of Justice in a massive show of solidarity for Detroit's striking newspaper employees.

Religious leaders have amplified the call for justice and a decent contract for the striking workers, and a lawsuit is challenging the newspapers' payment to local police, who are harassing the strikers.

A mass march, scheduled for Sept. 2, will send a clear message to Gannett and Knight-Ridder — and to every union-busting employer like them — organizers of the march said.

The mobilization, which is being coordinated by the Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO, comes on the heels of an AFL-CIO petition to Attorney General Janet Reno to declare that the joint operating agreement for the Free Press and News is not protected from antitrust challenges.

In announcing the petition, AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue said the Justice Department's Antitrust Division also has been asked to investigate and take action against the two newspapers' agreement, which he said "amounts to an illegal price-fixing cartel."

The original Detroit joint operating agreement, which created the Detroit Newspaper Agency to handle the two papers' business matters, was approved by Attorney General Edwin Meese in 1988. But that agreement was significantly amended in 1992 and the new agreement has not been approved by the attorney general.

The newspapers are relying on the amended agreement to justify their attempt to break the strike of their employees by publishing joint daily and weekend editions. They also have enlisted the help of the local police, so far "donating" $330,000 for them to harass pickets and allow scabs to cross picket lines, especially at the Sterling Heights printing plant.

The police attacked about 300 picketers Aug. 19 with billy clubs and fists after a three-hour standoff, arresting four and seriously injuring one. Sterling Heights Councilwoman Elaine Jankowski-Arnold said a Detroit TV station's video of the confrontation clearly shows the police provoked the fight by striking

Continued on Page 6



Daymon J. Hartley/TNG

Striking families in Detroit will get help through an adopt-a-striking-family program developed by AFL-CIO Community Services.

ORGANIZING

OPEIU gains med center

The employees at Michigan Capital Medical Center, beating back an anti-union campaign by management, voted 211-184 for representation by the Office and Professional Employees.

The unit will include all non-professionals, including housekeeping, dietary, unit coordinators, laboratory workers, medical records and admitting personnel at the Lansing, Mich. site.

The primary issues in the campaign were wages, pension and the need for a real voice on the job.

UFCW weathers storm

Hurricane Erin could not stop the workers at the Bay Manor nursing home in Mobile, Ala., from voting for Food and Commercial Workers representation.

Balloting was postponed because of the storm, but "the workers stayed strong," said UFCW organizer Julee Jerkovich. "The next week it was like providence. It was a beautiful day and the workers voted 57 to 23 for the union."

This is the third victory in as many months for UFCW in its "Care for the Caregiver" campaign against the anti-union Beverly Enterprise-owned homes.

"After we handbilled the company, they gave the workers a small raise, but the workers said they could not be bought off. They wanted dignity and respect," said Jerkovich.

Monfort vote stays union

Challenged ballots counted earlier this month from workers at a beef slaughtering house gave the Food and Commercial Workers a two-vote win.

Workers at the Monfort Inc. plant in Grand Island, Neb., initially voted 736-727 for the union last October. There were 37 challenged ballots. Monfort and the union agreed to the disposition of 27 of the ballots leaving 10 still challenged. Five were sustained and the last five were counted, leading to the latest revised tally.

The final outcome will be determined after a hearing in September to address additional company objections.

Executive order bearing fruit

Company settles strike to keep federal contracts

By James B. Parks

Undeterred by a court challenge by business associations, the Labor Department is pressing forward with President Clinton's executive order barring federal contracts with companies that permanently replace striking workers.

And just as the threat of permanent replacements has chilled collective bargaining, the threat of the president's executive order has moved at least one company back to the bargaining table, saving the jobs of 75 furniture workers in Clinton's home state of Arkansas.

Workers at Tiffany Office Furniture in Conway, Ark., ended a six-week strike July 18 after reaching a three-year contract agreement attributable in large part to the company's fear of losing federal contracts under Clinton's order. The executive order bars federal contracts worth at least $100,000 to companies that permanently replace striking employees.

After workers rejected the company's proposed contract and walked out June 6, the company hired replacement workers and refused to negotiate over the issues. When union attorneys threatened to file a complaint with the U.S. Labor Department under Clinton's order, "from that point forward there was concentrated settlement discussion," said Scott C. Trotter, attorney for the Carpenters' Southern Council of Industrial Workers Local 2385.

Tiffany has contracts with the General Services Administration worth more than $1 million a year, Trotter said. A former Tiffany official told Trotter company managers met to discuss the possible impact of the Clinton order and decided to negotiate. "It gave us some leverage we wouldn't have had."

Clinton's executive order "has been a big benefit for the Tiffany workers and it will be for workers across the country," said Arkansas AFL-CIO President J. Bill Becker.

"What has been gained is a mutual respect" between the workers and the company, said Tim Brewer, assistant to the executive secretary of SCIW.

The new contract retains eye care, raises wages by 15 cents retroactive to April 1, the date the last contract expired, and adds a retirement program.

Another employer under the gun is Bridgestone/Firestone Inc. The Labor Department July 28 said it is recommending debarment because the company hired permanent replacements for striking Rubber Workers.

The URW, before merger with the Steelworkers, suspended its strike against the giant Japanese tire manufacturer May 22 and switched strategies in its effort for a new contract. Some 4,200 URW members in five states walked out July 12, 1994, almost three months after their contract had expired. The strike was the longest in tire industry history. During the strike, Bridgestone/Firestone hired 2,300 replacement workers.

The nation's largest tire maker has federal contracts worth several million dollars, according to Steve Clems, research director of the USWA Rubber and Plastics Conference.

Meanwhile, the Labor Department asked a federal appeals court to lift an injunction against enforcing the executive order. The appeal contests U.S. District Judge Gladys Kessler's ruling that employers would suffer irreparable harm without the injunction, noting that Bridgestone/Firestone has not claimed it has been injured because of the order being enforced.

The regulations implementing the order require that many administrative steps be taken before any final enforcement order is executed, Labor contends. At the same time, the harm to the government and the public interest is "real and immediate."

The injunction prevents the Labor Department from enforcing an executive order, "which the president considers extremely important and which this court has held that it has no authority to review," the administration argued.

In a July 31 ruling, Kessler said the president has broad authority to oversee purchasing and make any improvements. Kessler let stand Clinton's executive order, but she issued an injunction against enforcing the order pending an appeal by business groups opposing it, led by the Chamber of Commerce and Bridgestone/Firestone.

Clinton signed the order March 6, pointing out that prolonged labor disputes and unstable labor relations among federal suppliers adversely affect the government's operations. Strikes involving permanent replacements generally last longer, the order said, and the replacement of a work force threatens the quality of a company's goods and services.

The order affects only the worst element of the employer community, the AFL-CIO pointed out. The vast majority of unionized companies with federal contracts, about 99 percent, reach collective bargaining agreements without a strike.

Joining the lawsuit against the order were the National Association of Manufacturers, the American Trucking Associations and the Labor Policy Association.

OCAW replaces scabs after unfair labor practices strike

Rosemount, Minn.

After a 14-month struggle at CF Industries, which committed numerous unfair labor practices, 24 members of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 6-662 returned to work when the NLRB reinstated everybody.

Their return displaced the "permanent replacements" CFI hired when the strike started on April 20, 1994 — a strike NLRB Administrative Law Judge George Christensen said the company deliberately goaded the union into.

"We all ought to be proud of these people," said OCAW Vice President L. Calvin Moore. "They were fighting not only for themselves, but also for the Koch Refining Group right across the street. That company was watching the whole thing like a vulture to see if our people would foul up," he told the OCAW Reporter.

In his decision, which the company accepted 12 days later, Christensen ruled OCAW was in an unfair labor practices strike, and CFI violated labor law by:

- Engaging in unfair labor practices after a previous OCAW contract expired in January — and then insisting on eliminating the union shop clause in any new contract. Christensen said those actions made the strike an unfair labor practices strike.
- Unilaterally changing working conditions by cutting the number of crane operators unloading fertilizer barges, creating unsafe working conditions.
- Stating in a letter from CFI President Robert Liuzzi to unionists after the strike started that workers would be permanently replaced, even though it was an unfair labor practices strike.
- Bargaining in bad faith. Christensen found the company deliberately set out in advance to provoke a strike at Rosemount, its only unionized plant. He noted management hired new workers for the plant who were in-laws of corporate executives. "This was a planned result . . . supported by CFI's elaborate arrangements prior to the strike," Christensen wrote.
- Demanding local police arrest strikers for disorderly conduct when the strikers were peacefully and safely picketing.

AFL-CIO NEWS

Director of Information: Rex Hardesty

Editor: Michael Byrne

Assistant Editors: David Kameras, Colleen M. O'Neill, James B. Parks

Staff Writers: Muriel H. Cooper, Mike Hall, Sharolyn A. Rosier

Graphics/Layout: Stan Hitt, Hindi M. Fracasse

AFL-CIO Press Secretary: Candice Johnson

AFL-CIO Headquarters: 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006
Telephone: (202) 637-5010 • CompuServe: 71112,53 • Internet: http://www.aflcio.org

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Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

Ron Hayes, whose son died because the nation's job safety laws were not enforced, appears in AFL-CIO ads.

Stand UP campaign takes case to public

Continued from Page 1

grain worker described by his father as "a hard worker and a good employee," who did what his supervisors told him and was killed doing it.

Patrick was sent into a massive silo and told to "walk the corn," which means he stood in the middle of the silo and scraped off corn stuck on the sides. At the same time, a giant augur was kept running beneath him, sucking corn down as he scraped — and eventually sucking him down in the corn. It took rescuers five hours to retrieve his body; he suffocated in the corn.

Ron Hayes, appearing with Donahue at the news conference, described how his son's death and others could have been prevented if the federal government enforced the nation's job safety laws. Instead, Congress seems bent on making enforcement more difficult. He praised the AFL-CIO for getting the message out.

"I want the American worker to know that somebody out there's sticking up for them," Hayes said. "The AFL-CIO does care about your lives and your loved ones."

Hayes, who has formed a national organization called FITE to bring together families of victims to fight for better laws and enforcement, also took the case for stronger safety protections to an Aug. 24 hearing in Pickens, S.C., where workers from South Carolina, Georgia and North Carolina rallied to protest an OSHA-gutting measure introduced by Rep. Cass Ballenger (R-N.C.)

Ballenger, Rep. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) and Rep. Charles Norwood (R-Ga.) held the hearing in an attempt to drum up support for their fearsome plans to dismantle the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, as well as the Mine Safety and Health Administration.

At the news conference, Donahue assailed the Republicans' attack on a draft ergonomics standard, which OSHA has proposed to deal with a 770 percent increase in injuries caused by repetitive stress.

Donahue called the bill "the most pernicious piece of writing that I have seen in a long time. It says that the Department of Labor is prohibited from keeping records, so if there is no record, then there are no cases" and no one can prove a standard is needed.

The bulk of the congressional districts where the AFL-CIO ads are appearing are represented by "first-term, freshman Republicans who may still be educable or may be defeatable," Donahue told the news conference. But unionists all across the country were pressing their legislators over plans to slash funding for worker programs, including Medicare and education, in order to pay for $245 billion in tax breaks for big business and the wealthy.

Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) received "special attention" from trade unionists during his multicity recess book tour. Workers, seniors and other members of community and civic groups gathered in Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Nashville and numerous other cities to point the finger at the man who is leading the Republicans' "Contract on America."

> *"I want the American worker to know that somebody out there's sticking up for them. The AFL-CIO does care about your lives and your loved ones."*
>
> **— Ron Hayes, father of workplace victim**

In Wisconsin, workers led by Gary Gilbertson of Food and Commercial Workers Local 538 met with GOP Rep. Scott Klug, a co-sponsor of H.R. 1834 — Ballenger's measure to undermine workers' job safety and health protections — in an effort to change his mind. Trade unionists in Klug's Madison, Wis., district plan a series of events designed to show the congressman the necessity of changing his position on the bill.

The overall thrust of this Republican Congress is "to carry out a business agenda," Donahue said, pointing to efforts to reduce the National Labor Relations Board's funding by 30 percent and to override President Clinton's executive order prohibiting federal contracts with companies that permanently replace striking workers.

When Congress returns, he noted, it will consider a bill to eliminate the guarantee of a 40-hour week, in which employers would not have to pay overtime after 40 hours of work in a week.

"That is plain obscene," he said. "That is a wrenching apart of the fabric of the American society that has been built up over the past 50 years, (that) people would have family lives, that they could live those lives on the weekends or on their days off."

In addition to the attacks on job safety, education, the National Labor Relations Board and Medicare, congressional Republicans have voted for a 12 percent cut in activities to prevent illegal sweatshops, child labor violations and violations of wage-and-hour laws; a 7.5 percent cut in the Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration, which guards the pensions of more than 200 million Americans; and a 20 percent cut in job training funds, including a plan to torpedo assistance to workers displaced by foreign trade (TAA and NAFTA-TAA).

After Labor Day, Congress also will be looking at bills to repeal the Davis-Bacon Act and to legalize company unions, as well as to end affirmative action programs. With 13 appropriations measures needed to be signed into law by Oct. 1, Government Employees were preparing for a possible government "lockout."

Education cuts pose big threat to every worker

Head Start, college grants, Goals 2000 on chop block

By Muriel H. Cooper

Every working family will be hurt if $36 billion in House cuts for education and training programs are allowed to stand, the AFL-CIO has warned.

This version of "robbin' from the hood" "will harm working families in every community," said AFT President Albert Shanker.

The cuts are part of the House 1996 appropriations for the departments of Labor, Education and Health and Human Services, which would slash money from programs essential to workers and their families — from workplace safety and Medicare to education and job training — to pay for tax breaks for the rich and big business.

Among the hardest hit programs is the very successful Head Start, which would provide services to 180,000 fewer children in the year 2002 than in 1995, as a result of the cuts.

Another 1.1 million children would have to be dropped from Title I programs that help students from disadvantaged backgrounds learn basic and advanced skills.

Some 17,500 public schools would be denied the use of Goals 2000, a bipartisan program that would help communities upgrade academic standards.

Families with college students would be hurt by the loss of federal grants, the largest single source of financial aid to students. In addition, the number of Pell grants available to college students would be reduced by 360,000 in 1996 alone.

Under the bill, the cost of college student loans would rise by as much as $2,111 for 5 million undergraduates and $9,424 for 728,000 graduate students. The Republicans also would kill the Americorps National Service program, which gives young people a chance to pay for their education through community work.

"Anyone who is forcing America's working families to pay increased costs for college students is denying — rather than providing — educational opportunity," said AFL-CIO Education Director Dorothy Shields. "And at the same time . . . they are protecting corporate subsidies and tax breaks for the wealthy."

"Federal investments in education are critical in maintaining the competitiveness of the U.S. economy in an information-based global marketplace," Shanker noted. "An investment in education provides expanded economic opportunities for middle-class families, and helps all students to achieve their potential."

"Federal grants to states represent one-fifth of state revenues, and all areas of federal aid are slated for deep cuts," according to the Committee for Education Funding, a coalition of 80 groups that include AFT. "Without major increases in taxes, states will not be able to sustain present levels of support for schools and students."

President Clinton has vowed to veto the education cuts. He wants to increase the education budget by $40 billion, Shanker said. "He has drawn the line and said, 'that's what I want to fight for.' The president has made education a priority."

Because education is a basic need for working families, the Republican cuts in education programs provide powerful ammunition for the AFL-CIO Stand UP campaign during the August recess. When Congress returns, the Senate will get a chance to reconsider some of the House-passed cuts, which include:

- The safe and drug-free schools program, used by 98 percent of the nation's school districts to keep crime, violence and drugs away from students and out of schools.
- Nearly $1.4 billion from job training programs.
- More than 550,000 summer youth jobs in 1996, and 3.9 million over seven years.

JOB SAFETY

Asbestos compliance put off

OSHA has further extended start-up dates for most provisions of the new asbestos standard, from July 10 to Oct. 1.

The agency is to publish corrections and clarifications to the standard along with compliance and training materials. Nearly 4 million workers are protected by the new standards, which seek to mitigate the lung cancer, asbestosis and other diseases brought on by exposure to asbestos.

The standard was issued Aug. 10, 1994, with a new, lower exposure limit of 0.1 fibers per cubic centimeter effective Oct. 11, 1994. Provisions under the new standard now delayed until Oct. 1 cover medical surveillance, respiratory protection, employee training and engineering control requirements for general industry, shipyards and construction.

Ravenswood settles case

Ravenswood Aluminum Corp. and OSHA have agreed to a $1.175 million penalty to settle charges of violations of OSHA's lockout/tagout standard.

The company was issued citations in late 1994 after a workplace accident that killed one worker and injured another at its Ravenswood, W.Va., facility. Steelworkers Local 5668 represents some 2,200 workers at that facility.

The lockout/tagout standard is designed to ensure mechanical equipment and machines cannot suddenly be turned on while workers are tending to them. Ravenswood also agreed to abate all hazards and implement an ongoing energy control program that is to include employee training.

TB rule expected this year

OSHA's regulatory agenda for the remainder of the year includes proposals concerning revised injury and illness record-keeping requirements and a new standard on workplace tuberculosis.

The agency said it was planning by October to release the record-keeping revisions and the standard on TB — long sought by the AFL-CIO and affiliated unions.

The schedule also included 14 priority rulemakings considered in the proposal stage, including respiratory protection and lockout/tagout for construction, and rules slated for final publication, including personal protective equipment, scaffolds and standards regulating exposure to 1,3-butadiene, glycol ethers and methylene chloride.

Injuries spur fine

OSHA has proposed a total of $1.386 million in fines against a New Jersey plastics firm alleged to have violated agency standards covering machine guards.

Ten serious injuries in 13 months — including mutilations and amputations resulting when employees' hands, fingers or arms were caught in moving or rotating parts of printing presses — were cited by the agency, which found 24 willful violations, 22 serious violations and 12 other-than-serious violations.

The company, Omega Plastics Corp. of Lyndhurst, N.J., had the necessary machine guards on hand but had neglected to install them.

Focused inspections policy

OSHA has developed a policy to expand the use of focused inspections to general industry.

A draft instruction issued last month sets forth rules under which a work site may qualify for such an inspection, designed to enable agency compliance officers to focus on the most serious hazards of the job.

The focused inspection until now has been used only in the construction industry, with enforcement personnel focusing on falls, being struck by objects, electrocutions and trenches.

Confined spaces hearings

In the wake of a settlement between the government and the Steelworkers, OSHA will hold hearings on proposed revisions to the agency's confined spaces standard.

The rule, issued in January 1993, governs employee operations within confined spaces, as well as rescue operations. The USWA took issue with the lack of a requirement for a timely rescue by an outside team, an official said.

The first hearing will begin at 9 a.m. on Sept. 27 at the Department of Labor in Washington.

Workplace violence addressed

Guidelines would help health care workers

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

Increasing violence in the workplace has prompted the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to issue its first guidelines on workplace violence.

The proposed guidelines are for the security and safety of health care and community service workers, who have been subject to an increasing number of severe injuries, OSHA said.

The guidelines cover psychiatric hospital inpatient facilities, clinics and outpatient facilities, emergency rooms and general hospitals, public workers in home and field operations and medical management.

However, the guidelines do not cover conditions of service workers in private health care facilities, or such public safety workers as police and fire fighters, who are regularly exposed to violence.

Still, labor welcomed the OSHA initiative. "They put out some good guidelines, but it has taken too long," said Jordan Barab, assistant director of health and safety in AFSCME'S Research Department and co-chair of the Labor Coalition on Workplace Violence. "We expect them to move rapidly and to include other sectors."

"OSHA has taken a real positive start to address the issue of workplace violence," said Keith Mestrich, AFL-CIO occupational safety and health specialist. "Only minor changes are needed, so the guidelines should be implemented quickly."

Implementation is expected by the end of the year.

The proposed guidelines call for employers in the health care industry to develop a written program for job safety, health and security, and to conduct worksite analysis and record review. Hazard prevention and controls also should be developed.

The programs must include a commitment by the employer to include employees, according to the guidelines. To ensure that workers are informed about safety and security hazards, training and education are emphasized, including job-specific training and training for supervisors and managers.

During the past few years, health care and community workers have died as the result of violence in emergency rooms, psychiatric hospitals, community mental health clinics and social service offices. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 45 percent of all workplace assaults, the assailant is a patient.

Additionally, some 27 percent of all workplace assaults occur in nursing homes and 11 percent occur in hospitals.

Little research is available on the incidence of violence to community service workers, according to OSHA, but reports have been received from many sources, including parking enforcement workers who have suffered abusive and at times violent behavior.

The increase in violence can be attributed to the easy availability of guns and weapons; the use of violence to solve problems by many in the population; decrease in social services to the unemployed, impoverished and mentally ill; and the increasing use of hospitals by police and criminal justice systems for disturbed patients.

Other risk factors include the early release from hospitals of the acute and chronically mentally ill, the right of patients to refuse psychotropic treatment, inability to involuntarily hospitalize mentally ill people unless they pose an immediate threat to themselves or others and the use of hospitalization in lieu of incarceration of criminals.

California is the only state with guidelines for workplace security for all workers. CalOSHA prescribes preventive measures employers should take, recording and reporting requirements, how employers should handle complaints alleging workplace security hazards and how employers should investigate assaults involving death or serious injury.

The Florida legislature passed a workplace safety law for the retail industry. New Jersey has guidelines that cover workers in mental health institutions.

Pan Am retirees seek pension relief

By James B. Parks

A group of former Pan Am employees is considering suing the federal pension protection agency, claiming it improperly slashed up to $600 per month from the benefits of employees who retired when the airline went out of business.

"This is an avalanche waiting to happen," said Richard A. Brooks, president of the Association of Former Pan Am Employees. The Teamsters have promised financial and legal support while the Air Line Pilots and Transport Workers are considering ways to assist the retirees, Brooks said.

The Bush-era Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation terminated Pan Am's pension fund in July 1991, leaving it underfunded by $800 million. Pan Am closed Dec. 4, 1991.

Brooks claims that the PBGC, in an effort to save money, cheated some 8,600 employees under age 55 out of the promised pension benefits, saying they retired voluntarily before they qualified for the highest benefit rate of 79 percent. That was the rate for workers who were at least age 55 with 10 years of service. Instead, they could receive 42.5 percent, which was the rate for workers under 55.

The average loss for a worker is about $400-$600 a month, Brooks said, noting that the workers retired because they had no choice after Pan Am stopped flying. The company should have kept its promise that early retirees would receive the higher benefit, he said.

Another factor contributing to the problem, Brooks said, is that the Internal Revenue Service allowed Pan Am to waive about $904 million in pension contributions between 1983 and 1991.

Three and a half years after Pan Am closed, the workers have not seen a penny of the pension money because the PBGC has been dragging its feet before issuing a final determination of the employees' benefits, Brooks said. Until that determination is issued, the workers don't even have the right to file a lawsuit against PBGC.

"Now, after a three-and-a-half-year wait, they're telling us it will be another two years before this is settled. By that time, people will have been out of work for five years with no pension. That's wrong," he said. "Since when does a citizen of the United States of America have to wait five years to file an appeal against a government agency to find some justice?"

The PBGC claims it cannot find all the participants in the Pan Am pension program. Brooks said his organization has a database of 20,000 former Pan Am employees that it volunteered to share with PBGC, but was rebuffed.

The strain on the former workers has been great, Brooks said, contributing to 11 suicides and nearly 275 heart attacks.

NBC's "Dateline" news program was planning a report on the plight of the retirees, Brooks said. "The stories brought tears to the reporter's eyes."

The ex-Pan Am employees recently lobbied senators from five states where the bulk of former Pan Am workers live — New York, New Jersey, California, Florida and Virginia. Only Florida's Connie Mack (R) would not meet with them, Brooks said.

Bangladesh garment factory fire kills nine

Nine workers were trampled to death as workers fled during a fire in a Bangladesh garment factory that had only one narrow staircase to the exit.

Nearly 100 more workers were hurt as they fled down the narrow staircase when the fire alarm sounded in a nine-story Dhaka building, which houses the workshops of two companies, FAA Garments and Lusaka Garments.

At least four of the dead and injured were under the age of 14.

The gate at the exit was locked, other escape routes were blocked by boxes and firefighting equipment was absent or inaccessible. One of the two factories was operating without government registration and was not yet a member of the Bangladesh Garment Manufactures and Exporters Association, which last month agreed to phase out child labor in the garment industry.

Meanwhile, the Child Labor Coalition is seeking signatures on a nationwide petition in support of RUGMARK, the label that designates rugs as being not made by children under 14 years old. For copies of the petition or for more information, call 202/835-3323 or FAX 202/835-0747.

COURTS

Pittston suit dismissed

Saying the union is not liable for actions taken by Congress, a West Virginia federal judge has dismissed a $120 million lawsuit by the Pittston Coal Group against the Mine Workers.

The suit claimed the UMWA violated a portion of its 1989 contract that ended a bitter nine-month strike. In a side letter, the UMWA agreed to actively oppose any legislation that would require coal operators, including Pittston, to make retroactive contributions to pay for retiree health benefits and assume a continuing obligation to the funds. Pittston dropped out of the industry multiemployer group, the Bituminous Coal Operators Association, in 1988 and stopped contributing to the health benefits fund.

The company charged the union with actively backing the Coal Industry Retiree Health Benefits Act of 1992, which requires contributions by companies that no longer contributed to the benefits fund, but that employed retirees covered by the union fund.

Judge Samuel Wilson ruled that the courts should avoid trying to determine the motives of Congress in passing legislation. To rule for Pittston, the judge said he would have to show that the UMWA's lobbying caused the bill to be passed, which is impossible to determine.

The UMWA is "very pleased" with the decision, said union General Counsel Robert Stropp, adding "we hope (the litigation) is over."

Kmart order sent back

A federal appeals court has ordered the National Labor Relations Board to re-examine an order directing a Moreno, Ill., Kmart warehouse to bargain with the Teamsters.

The court ruled the NLRB failed to address charges that the union intimidated employees before the 1993 election, which the union narrowly won. Four witnesses claimed the union photographed and videotaped the area near the warehouse entrance, the same thing the company was accused of doing.

The court emphasized it was not ruling on the fairness of the election, but thought the issue of union intimidation should be looked into.

Kmart already has settled with the NLRB over a complaint filed by IBT Local 705 that it spied on employees during an organizing drive at the Moreno plant. Kmart admitted it had a security team filming workers, but claimed that it was done in order to stop theft.

Benefits plan challenged

The Labor Department must reconsider its decision that a contractor's fringe benefit plan is not valid under the Davis-Bacon Act, a federal appeals court ruled.

The D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals said the Labor Department could not invalidate a fringe benefit plan just because employer contributions were made while employees are doing Davis-Bacon work, but benefits were disbursed when employees were doing other work.

The case, Tom Mistick & Sons vs. Reich, began in 1988 when Mistick set up a Davis-Bacon fringe benefit plan while it was a federal contractor obligated to pay the prevailing wage. Its contributions to the plan were equal to the difference between the prevailing wage and the lower wages it was paying.

Workers could draw on their trust accounts at any time for various benefits.

The Labor Department invalidated the plan because contributions were not based on the actual costs required to pay for benefits and argued that employees were entitled to all the benefits only while working on the Davis-Bacon project.

The appeals court overruled both those objections and ordered the department to review its decision. But the court also gave the department leeway to invalidate the plan again if it finds that non-bona-fide disbursements were made. If that is the case, then Mistick must pay back wages to the employees equal to the fringe benefit contributions, the court said.



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

AFL-CIO Vice President Gloria Johnson, center, discusses affirmative action at the Second Conference on Racial Equality between U.S. and Brazilian trade unionists, held at the George Meany Center for Labor Studies Aug. 22. Johnson, president of the Coalition of Labor Union Women, is flanked by Neide Fonseca of Brazil's CUT labor federation and June Shong of the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance. The conference was sponsored by the AFL-CIO and the American Institute for Free Labor Development.

Family leave law proves merits

By Colleen M. O'Neill

The record has proven the naysayers wrong on the Family and Medical Leave Act, the first legislation signed into law by President Clinton in his first month in office.

After two years, statistics and studies show that compliance has been reasonably strong and of little cost to employers.

"The act is working — for employers and employees," said Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich. "Workers in this country no longer have to make agonizing choices between receiving medical treatment or caring for seriously ill loved ones and keeping their jobs."

"In two years of administering this new workplace policy, we have found the problems are few and the benefits are great," said Marie Echaveste, administrator of the Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division, at an Aug. 9 conference in Chicago.

"Employers find the act reduces turnover and increases productivity, and workers are forever grateful for the opportunity to spend time caring for a loved one without the fear of losing their job," she said.

Statistics released Aug. 3 by the DoL show 90 percent successful resolutions of complaints in which FMLA violations were found. Those complaints ranged from an employer's refusal to reinstate an employee to the same or equivalent position to failure to grant leave under the act's provision, interference with or discrimination against employees using FMLA and failure to maintain health benefits for employees on leave.

By June 30 of this year, some 3,167 complaints had been lodged under the statute since its effective date of Aug. 5, 1993. The DoL has filed suit in just three cases, with two already settled.

The law requires employers with more than 50 workers to offer those workers the right to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave a year to care for a newborn or newly adopted child or for certain seriously ill family members, or to recover from their own serious health problem.

The law did not take effect for most covered union employees until Feb. 5, 1994.

President Clinton hailed the FMLA Aug. 5 during his weekly radio address, and noted its importance in the anti-family atmosphere of the Republican Congress.

"We ought to invest in education, invest in our families, raise the minimum wage, target tax relief to raising children and educating them, protect the Medicare of our seniors and protect the right of people to keep their health insurance if they change jobs or if someone in the family gets sick," he said.

Clinton urged Congress to build upon the FMLA rather than tearing it down. He said lawmakers seem intent on cutting back programs that advance family values through such measures as the recent appropriations bill for the Labor, Education and Health and Human Services departments.

Health care portability on Senate floor

The Senate is set to consider legislation to ensure portability of health care coverage and other incremental reforms upon its return from summer recess.

In unanimous, bipartisan fashion, the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee sent to the floor a measure that would:

- Limit to 12 months the period during which an insurance company could refuse to pay for treatment of a pre-existing condition.
- Bar new waiting periods for adults or their children as long as an insurance policy did not lapse for 30 days or longer.
- Require insurers to renew policies, regardless of customers' health or claims histories, unless the companies were abandoning the group health business.
- Require certain types of information gathered under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act be disclosed to group plan participants and beneficiaries.

The AFL-CIO supported portability of health care benefits as part of last year's fight for comprehensive health care reform. In the absence of an overhaul of the system this year, workers may have to resign themselves to such small market reforms, Democrats said.

"This is a real balancing act to do something that represents meaningful change," said Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.). The bill would provide some protection and "start eliminating some of the worst abuses of the private insurance market."

Without much-needed reforms, the health care arena continues to shift to the detriment of health care workers and patients alike. These changes include the downsizing of professional staff in hospitals — including physicians and registered nurses — and greater cost-shifting onto the backs of those covered by insurance.

A recent study shows that the quality of health care may be threatened by efforts by hospitals and health maintenance organizations to slim down — including shortening patient hospital stays and paring the number of highly skilled registered nurses in favor of using less-skilled technicians for direct patient care.

Even innovative efforts to cut costs show mixed effects on quality of patient care and employee satisfaction, the Economic Policy Institute states in "Cost and Quality Matters: Workplace Innovations in the Health Care Industry."

Hospitals have been most successful when they have sought to bring about savings without worker layoffs and, in fact, used worker involvement and cooperation to bring about changes over several years, EPI points out.

Among seven case studies presented by EPI is Kaiser Bellflower Hospital near downtown Los Angeles, which implemented a "patient-focused care" program with the assistance of its employees, who belong to Service Employees Local 399 and AFSCME's United Nurses Association of California.

Besides Bellflower, the case studies were conducted at the University of Michigan Medical Center in Ann Arbor; University Hospital, an academic medical center based on the West Coast; Mercy Hospital in Chicago; Harvard Community Health Plan in Boston; Paoli Memorial Hospital in suburban Philadelphia; and St. Vincent Hospital in Indianapolis.

— Colleen M. O'Neill

U.S. urged to probe Detroit news cartel

Religious leaders speak up for workers, against scabs

Continued from Page 1

the first blow. And she warned of increasing violence as long as the newspapers continue to reimburse the police.

The Teamsters filed suit, asking the Macomb County Circuit Court to stop Sterling Heights from accepting the money, a practice the union claims is a clear conflict of interest.

Unions also are reaching into their pockets to help striking brothers and sisters in need, initially raising $1 million promised by the AFL-CIO Executive Council Aug. 2.

This means that "striking Teamsters who were not receiving strike benefits now have their first strike benefits check in hand," said Mine Workers President Richard L. Trumka, chair of the AFL-CIO Strategic Approaches Committee. The AFL-CIO assigned staff to Detroit to help even before the strike started in response to the unions' request for help through the committee.

The AFL-CIO Community Service Department also has started an adopt-a-striking-family program called the DNA (Detroit Newspaper Association) Striker Relief Fund, which will be administered by the Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO. Donations should be made payable to and sent to DNA Striker Relief Fund, Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO, 2550 West Grand Blvd., Detroit, Mich. 48208.

The AFL-CIO is moving ahead with an action plan approved by the council in its August meeting. The federation will initiate a nationwide campaign targeting six companies that continue to place advertisements in the struck newspapers — J.C. Penney, Lord and Taylor, Target, Home Depot, Hudsons and Montgomery Ward.

Donahue sent letters to those companies informing them that if they continue to advertise in the Detroit papers, union members nationwide will be alerted that these companies are attacking the Detroit unions by continuing to advertise in a scab-produced paper. The 2,600 employees of the News and Free Press have been on strike since July 13 after negotiations failed to produce a new agreement. Management and imported scabs from other papers are producing the joint newspaper, and hired union-busting security goons are delivering the papers.



Daymon J. Hartley/TNG

Police attack some 300 picketers outside the Sterling Heights, Mich., printing plant on Aug. 19.

Striking workers are publishing a strike paper, the Detroit Journal, which is available via FAX and on the Internet through the AFL-CIO web page. The address is http//www.aflcio.org.

Gannett and Knight-Ridder, publishers of the Detroit News and Detroit Free Press, respectively, are demanding 200 job cuts, givebacks on health care, restrictions on the grievance procedure, shifting of some full-time jobs to part-time with no benefits and elimination of 1,600 news carriers.

The Detroit News also unilaterally imposed a so-called merit pay system for editorial staff represented by Newspaper Guild Local 22. The Free Press threatened to permanently replace its Guild members who did not return to the newsroom by Aug. 10.

When the papers were losing money three years ago, workers agreed to give up pay raises and 350 jobs. Last year the newspapers made $55 million. Reporters' pay has been frozen for four years while Gannett and Knight-Ridder, two of the top five newspaper chains, made a combined $640 million last year.

The strike has drawn strong support from the Detroit community. Cardinal Adam Maida of the Detroit Archdiocese issued a statement condemning the use of permanent replacements for striking workers.

"If striking workers are threatened with being permanently replaced, this practice seems to undermine the legitimate purpose of the union and to destroy any possibility for collective bargaining," Maida said. The statement was read by some priests from the pulpit and appeared on the front page of the Archdiocese newspaper.

A similar statement was issued by Episcopal Bishop Stewart Wood. Two key religious groups — 93 Catholic priests, deacons and lay leaders, and three key African-American religious leaders — placed ads in several Detroit-area newspapers opposing the permanent replacement of strikers, calling it "wrong."

The Interfaith Committee on Worker Issues, a group of 110 religious leaders closely associated with the Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO, met with executives of the Free Press and the DNA to express their belief that permanent replacements are immoral.

Former Mayor Coleman A. Young, in a letter to DNA Chairman Frank Vega, said he had grudgingly supported the joint operating agreement because he was assured that it would save jobs and that it would serve the best interests of Detroit. "Now, despite the assurance given to me and to many others, the Detroit Newspaper Agency is violating both your legal and moral commitments to the Detroit community," Young said.

Meanwhile, negotiations between the newspapers and the Metropolitan Council of Newspaper Unions, which represents the striking unions, are going slowly.

Illinois lifts Staley tax breaks as Pepsi Weekend rolls on

By James B. Parks

After pressure from the Paperworkers, Illinois officials have lifted some of the tax breaks received by A.E. Staley, which seems bent on destroying jobs rather than producing them, as envisioned by the state.

Meanwhile, Staley workers have enlisted the aid of pigs, chickens and rock 'n' roll, as they extended their Action on Pepsi Weekend to encompass the Labor Day holiday.

Gathered around two feeding pigs, dozens of locked-out UPIU members called for an end to tax breaks that Staley receives in return for a promise, which it failed to keep, to retain jobs. Staley is "feeding at the public trough and gobbling up goodies just as fast as they can get them in their little piggy snouts," said Art Dhermy of UPIU Local 7837.

Three multinational corporations involved in labor disputes — Staley, Caterpillar Inc. and Bridgestone/Firestone — all have plants in a 9.3-square-mile "enterprise zone" in Decatur, Ill., where they receive property tax abatements and credits against their state income tax on the value of new construction or machinery renovation.

The tax deals have cost the city of Decatur nearly $4 million a year in property taxes each year for the past nine years.

Staley received tax breaks worth more than $500,000 in 1993 alone, Dhermy said, while employment at the plant declined by 690 jobs, or 48 percent, since it began getting the enterprise zone abatements.

Property taxes on five pieces of Staley property were reduced by 30 percent in 1986, Dhermy said, from $12 million to $8.4 million. Another $183,000 was knocked off in 1991, he said.

Last October, in the middle of its lockout of 760 UPIU members, Staley received a new sales tax exemption on the purchase of machinery. The company was required to show that the investment would save jobs. But, in reality, Staley is using the exemption for new equipment that will help automate the facility and eliminate jobs, the union said.

In 1992, Staley received a 100 percent tax exemption on its $1 million-a-month utility bill so long as it employed at least 1,000 people. Both deals run for five years and will save the company more than $5.5 million.

In a cruel and ironic twist, Staley tried to justify keeping the tax breaks by arguing that it still employs more than 1,000 people, including 569 of the locked-out workers, who haven't been paid in more than two years. But the state would not accept that argument.

Some 760 UPIU members, formerly Allied Industrial Workers, were locked out on June 27, 1993. Staley, a subsidiary of the London-based conglomerate Tate and Lyle, demanded that workers agree to unlimited subcontracting, the loss of several hundred bargaining unit jobs, 12-hour rotating shifts with no premium pay and the gutting of seniority protections. When the union balked, the workers were locked out and replaced by scabs.

Workers have been without a contract since Sept. 30, 1992, and have lost more than $24 million in wages. The workers rejected the company's latest proposal after the union negotiating committee and executive board condemned the company for continuing to demand the right to unlimited subcontracting as well as the 12-hour rotating shifts.

Since the lockout, one Staley worker, 37-year-old James Lindsey of Terre Haute, Ind., was killed after a grain bin exploded July 30. Lindsey was hospitalized with second- and third-degree burns over much of his body and died about a week later. Before the explosion, Staley had refused to let the union conduct a safety inspection, but after Lindsey's death, the company recanted and allowed the local's safety officer to tour the plant.

Meanwhile, the union will follow its Action on Pepsi Weekend, Aug. 25-27, with a similar event over the Labor Day weekend, seeking to pressure the beverage company to stop using Staley corn sweetener. Union members and their supporters will turn out to leaflet in Cleveland during the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame broadcast, sponsored in part by Pepsi, and for a Labor Day parade in Boston that will spotlight the Pepsi connection to Staley.

The Staley dispute is drawing national media attention as well. "Crackers, the Corporate Crime-Fighting Chicken" from Fox Television's "TV Nation" show, visited Staley's plant and a Caterpillar plant in Decatur.

According to press reports, the seven-foot, 200-pound chicken crossed company property and walked up to the gate at Staley followed by a TV film crew. He was stopped by Staley security guards, who themselves were carrying video cameras. The chicken was threatened with arrest and left, but not before shaking and rattling the gate. The show was set to air Aug. 25.

CWA serves notice on renegade Bell Atlantic

By James B. Parks

The Communications Workers are gearing up for a major corporate campaign against Bell Atlantic that could include advertising, pressure from investors and coordinated actions by world labor.

"We've never done anything this extensive," said CWA President Morton Bahr. The union authorized an initial $5 million advertising and investor relations campaign to present its case to the public. The wide-ranging ad campaign would be combined with an effort to get stockholders, company directors, union pension funds and other major investors to push Bell Atlantic to settle.

CWA has settled on contracts with AT&T and six of the seven regional Bell operating companies that give workers raises of 10 percent to 11 percent over three years, job security improvements and no cost shifting in health care.

But Bell Atlantic, the nation's second-largest telecommunications company with whopping profits of $1.4 billion last year, has refused to follow the pattern.

"We are bargaining for the future of our jobs, of union jobs," said CWA spokesman Jeff Miller. "This is a pattern that has become all too common — a wealthy company well positioned for the future trying to please Wall Street by raking in profits and cutting jobs. This is the fight of the whole labor movement."

CWA represents 37,000 Bell Atlantic employees in West Virginia, Virginia, District of Columbia, Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

Bahr plans to discuss the union's problems with the Postal, Telephone and Telegraph international trade secretariat. Bell Atlantic has major holdings in New Zealand, United Kingdom and Mexico, and the union hopes that international pressure can be used to persuade the company to bargain in good faith.

The CWA also plans to seek help from the AFL-CIO and affiliated unions in the Bell Atlantic service area. CWA has been asking union members to turn in cards canceling optional services such as call waiting and caller ID.

As part of the effort, the union intends to heavily lobby Congress, state legislatures and state public utilities commissions to inform them of the consequences of Bell Atlantic's actions, Miller said.

The latest settlement with two US WEST companies covers 35,000 CWA members and 500 Electrical Workers in 14 western and midwestern states.

The tentative contract with the larger US WEST Communications calls for a 10.6 percent pay raise over three years and a $1,500 signing bonus. The previous three-year contracts expired Aug. 12.

The tentative agreement with the smaller unit, US WEST Business Resources, calls for a 10.4 percent raise with a $700 signing bonus.

Bell Atlantic has proposed what it calls an 8.5 percent raise, but the union says it really is a compounded base salary boost of only 3.9 percent over three years. The company also is demanding unlimited subcontracting, Miller said. A smaller IBEW unit at Bell Atlantic settled its contract earlier.

Talks continued after the Aug. 5 contract expiration, but the company refused to extend the contract. Since then it stopped deducting union dues from employees' pay and halted arbitration rights.

Not only are the concerns of Bell Atlantic workers being ignored, its customers are being ignored as well. The union released a report showing the quality of Bell Atlantic service has deteriorated drastically over the past few years. The number of customer complaints for repeat service problems soared from about 72,000 in 1992 to more than 350,000 in a similar period of 1994, the report said.

The service is deteriorating because Bell Atlantic "gives short shrift to the regulated basic telephone business — the 'cash cow' for the company — so it can divert these profits into new investments," said CWA Vice President Vincent Maisano. "Among the reasons for deteriorating service is the steady downsizing of employees in key customer service positions."

The company also is neglecting maintenance and abandoning copper wire investments needed to meet increased consumer demand for telephone lines, the report showed.

TWU gains airline accord for 27,000

By David Kameras

Transport Workers at American Airlines have reached a tentative six-year pact that combines wage increases with job security and an early retirement option for senior employees.

The agreement, which covers 27,000 mechanics, fleet service clerks and flight instructors, as well as dispatchers, guards, stock clerks, meteorologists and flight simulator technicians, would raise wages 3.5 percent in August 1998 and 3 percent in February 2000. Further increases would result from seniority movements up the wage scale.

While American would be able to use more part-time workers and establish new, lower-paying job classifications, current workers otherwise targeted for pay reduction would be offered higher-skilled jobs at their existing wages. Workers 45 years or older with at least 15 years of service could opt for a five-year boost in seniority and retire early.

In other airline industry developments:

● The National Mediation Board has ruled that nearly 2,500 pilots at four subsidiaries of American Airlines' regional operation should be represented by one union instead of the current three.

The board agreed with the Air Line Pilots and two unaffiliated unions that Executive Airlines, Flagship Airlines, Simmons Airlines and Wings West, all American Eagle carriers, constitute a "single transportation system" as defined by the Railway Labor Act, and are subject to systemwide representation, to be determined by a NMB-authorized election.

"We welcome the opportunity to demonstrate for the American Eagle pilots the advantages of joining the 43,000 pilots already represented by the world's largest and most effective union for airline pilots," ALPA President J. Randolph Babbitt said.

● Despite "significant movement," talks have bogged down between ALPA and Federal Express as the two sides try to hammer out a first contract for the freight carrier's 2,400 pilots.

"Management has consistently proposed that our pilots be willing to accept major concessions in work rules to fund any economic improvements," said John Poag, chairman of the FedEx master executive council negotiating committee.

"Major concessions at a time of maximum pilot productivity and record profits is absolutely unacceptable to FedEx pilots," he said.

"Unfortunately, we believe management will not take us seriously until and unless they are faced with the deadline imposed by a 30-day cooling-off period" imposed by the NMB after it declares an impasse in bargaining, the union said.



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

NALC President Vincent R. Sombrotto outlines arbritrated contract to some 1,500 Letter Carriers.

NALC award rejects USPS givebacks

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

Nearly a year after postal bargaining started, a three-member arbitration panel awarded a new four-year contract providing Letter Carriers with wage increases, cash payments and continuation of cost-of-living adjustments.

Arbitration hearings for the Postal Workers resume Aug. 30, and a decision is expected sometime in September. Hearings have yet to be scheduled for the Mail Handlers division of the Laborers. Contracts expired Nov. 20, 1994.

"While I am pleased with the continuation of the COLA and wage increases, and the rejection of management's attempt to negotiate harmful changes in the contract, I am disappointed that all of the increases were not basic wage increases," said NALC President Vincent Sombrotto.

"I am extremely proud of the quality of the case we put on," he added. "The results are indicative of our efforts."

In issuing the 66-page award, neutral Arbitrator Arthur Stark repeatedly rejected bargaining positions of the U.S. Postal Service, which called for lower salaries, a two-tier system for leave and an increase in the number of transitional employees.

The award came after 18 days of hearings that resulted in thousands of pages of testimony and exhibits and two weeks of executive sessions by the panel. The two other panel members were NALC General Counsel Bruce Simon and USPS Vice President of Labor Relations Joseph Mahon.

The NALC contract, covering some 240,000 letter carriers, will run from Aug. 19, 1995, through Nov. 20, 1998.

Key monetary provisions of the contract include:

● A one-time cash payment of $950 as soon as administratively practicable.

● A basic wage increase of 1.2 percent, effective Nov. 25, 1995, and a 1.2 percent increase effective Nov. 22, 1997.

● A one-time cash payment of $400, effective Nov. 21, 1996.

● Six COLA payments, using October 1995 as the base.

Other provisions include a 10 percent increase in the uniform allowance and up to 80 hours of sick leave to care for a family member who is ill or injured. Full-time regular employees who sign the "overtime desired" list will remain on the list.

In a non-binding recommendation, Stark also asked the parties to promptly resume discussions on a step-less pay structure; promotion pay anomaly; annual leave buy-back provisions; overtime distribution; design, evaluation and compensation of letter carrier work in an automated environment; and grievance and arbitration procedures.

Because the Postal Service could not reach a voluntary agreement, it may be called on the carpet when Congress holds hearings this fall, Sombrotto told of crowd of almost 1,500 NALC members during an Aug. 20 National Rap Session. He urged members to be vigilant against efforts to privatize the service.

BARGAINING

UAW ratifies Rouge pact

The UAW ratified a new five-year contract with Rouge Steel Co. that calls for a 6.25 percent wage increase and lump-sum payments of at least $500 in subsequent years.

A $2.33 hourly cost-of-living allowance will be folded in before the calculation of the wage increase, which comes in the first year. Workers also will receive a $1,000 ratification bonus. In subsequent years, the workers will receive "annual inflation recognition payments" of at least $500, as well as an extra $500 in 1998.

The agreement, which covers 2,600 members of UAW Local 600 at the Dearborn, Mich., complex, also continues the profit-sharing program, increases participation in an incentive program and improves the pension plan.

AFSCME, Oregon agree

AFSCME members will vote soon on a tentative two-year contract with the state of Oregon that calls for a 2 percent wage increase.

The wage increase would come on June 30, 1997, and would apply only to those persons in selected jobs currently paid below the state average for those classifications. The contract covers 3,000 state workers represented by AFSCME Council 75.

The state also agreed to continue paying 6 percent into the public employees retirement system.

Chicago AFT gains contract

The Chicago AFT ratified a new four-year agreement with the city board of education that raises wages by 13 percent over the life of the contract.

A 3 percent increase in each of the first two years will be followed by a 3.25 percent raise in 1998 and 3.4 percent in 1999. All of the raises except the first are based on the board's ability to pay. The union has the right to reopen the contract in the last three years.

Under the agreement, teachers also will be paid for an added week of planning. Class size will become a board policy matter, not a contract provision, and reserve teachers who lose jobs through school or program closings will be given temporary assignments until permanent positions are found.

BCT reaches two accords

The Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers reached tentative agreements on contracts with Campbell-Taggart and Interstate/Continental, covering some 2,400 employees at eight locals making bread and cakes.

The three-year agreement with Campbell-Taggart increases wages by 85 cents over the term of the contract. It also increases pension benefits, maintains health benefits and creates a program to train senior employees in a different job if a plant closes.

The 33-month Interstate/Continental deal calls for wage increases totaling 65 cents. It also increases pension benefits by $100 in the first year and $75 in the second.

IBT ends Pepsi strike

The Teamsters ended a six-week strike after ratifying a new contract with Pepsi Cola bottlers near Los Angeles that raises wages $2.10 an hour over four years. The raises come in increments of 55 cents this year, 45 cents in 1996, 30 cents in 1997, 35 cents in 1998 and 45 cents in 1999.

The contract narrowly won ratification, 159-141, because of objections to a clause transferring pension coverage from the union plan to a company plan, said IBT Joint Council 42 Vice President Jim Santangelo.

UAW, Caterpillar talk

For the first time since February, talks between the UAW and Caterpillar are set to resume. The UAW requested the talks, scheduled for Aug. 29-31, both sides announced.

These will be the first formal talks for UAW Vice President Richard Shoemaker, who took over the union's Caterpillar Department, replacing retired Secretary-Treasurer Bill Casstevens.

Some 14,000 UAW members walked out June 21, 1994, over unfair labor practices. The strike affects eight plants in Illinois, Pennsylvania and Colorado.

The previous contract expired in September 1991. Since the strike began, Caterpillar has used temporary workers and supervisors to keep up production.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Transportation Communications Union President Robert A. Scardelletti, re-elected by acclamation, asserts the need for continued solidarity among his members, stressing "an injustice to one is an injustice to all."

TCU hails 'sweeping changes'

By David Kameras

In a show of confidence in their leadership, delegates to the Transportation Communication Union's 30th convention in Miami Beach unanimously returned their union's top officers to new four-year terms.

International President Robert A. Scardelletti pointed to "sweeping changes" he has sought in the past four years "to recapture the strength and vitality that had been part of our union throughout most of its proud history."

One such goal has been to draw closer together the various divisions and crafts within TCU, including the policy of all TCU members at a property going on strike in solidarity any time a single division strikes.

"We each have unique problems and concerns that must be addressed," Scardelletti said. "But strength only comes when we all pull together as one strong union. We must never forget that an injustice to one is an injustice to all."

In addition to paying strike benefits to its members, TCU has for the first time paid benefits to members honoring the picket lines of other unions, and has established a hardship fund.

"By our action, we have sent a message to every company where we work that we're going to back up what we say," Scardelletti asserted.

Scardelletti was re-elected by acclamation, along with Secretary-Treasurer Frank Ferlin Jr., Carmen Division President Bob Wojtowicz and Assistant President Rich Johnson.

Scardelletti reported that the union has overhauled its leadership seminars at the George Meany Center for Labor Studies, including introduction of an advanced program. Delegates also unanimously supported a 50-cent assessment for universal training of local representatives.

Scardelletti praised a 98 percent strike authorization among eligible voters in national negotiations, and announced his request to the National Mediation Board for a release from mediation.

In spite of soaring profits, railroads "continue to seek work-rule concessions, sweeping rollbacks in our health and welfare benefits, and they tell us that rail workers are overpaid," he said. "They are disgraceful."

Rep. David E. Bonior (D-Mich.), the House minority whip and a longtime ally of the labor movement, told the convention, "There is something wrong when corporate profits climb 80 percent while workers' salaries drop 20 percent."

Rep. Lincoln Diaz-Balart (R-Fla.) praised TCU's Legislative Department for helping to block congressional efforts to repeal Section 13(c) labor protection for transit workers.

Jack Otero, deputy undersecretary of labor for international affairs and former TCU vice president, pledged "100 percent" support by the Clinton administration for TCU's positions on Amtrak funding, labor protections and contracting out.

Mine Workers President Richard L. Trumka thanked TCU for its help during an 18-month coal strike in 1993, during which not one of the 18,000 affected miners crossed the picket line.

The convention endorsed Trumka for secretary-treasurer as part of the slate for AFL-CIO office headed by Service Employees President John J. Sweeney.

Other convention speakers were Marilyn Lenard, president, Florida AFL-CIO; V.M. Speakman, labor member of the Railroad Retirement Board and former president of the Railway Signalmen; Pamela Pinnock, Union Privilege customer service representative; and syndicated radio broadcaster Jim Hightower.

Transport Workers reject N.Y. train pact

Members of the Transport Workers have turned down a tentative agreement with Metro-North, a railroad serving 95,000 commuters in New York's northern suburbs.

They join two other unions that have rejected pacts with the carrier, which successfully sought a second presidential emergency board, created July 31. Seventeen unions in all represent workers at the carrier.

TWU President Sonny Hall characterized the failed agreement as "the best available at the time, short of a strike, especially considering the financial climate we were bargaining in."

However, "our membership and, I believe, the memberships of all the unions at Metro-North, believe that the carrier can afford to pay more than the improvements contained in the rejected accord," he said.

TWU members also authorized a strike call if necessary. While the union is seeking a new offer from management, "we will not shy away from a strike if it comes to that," Hall said.

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which operates Metro-North, is also trying to open up its existing contract with TWU transit employees, threatening to lay off more than 2,000 New York City bus and subway workers unless substantial give-backs are conceded.

"I don't relish the thought of having to take a more militant stand," Local 100 President Damaso Seda told The New York Times, "but if push comes to shove, it will get real ugly."

Court stops BMWE strike

Meanwhile, Maintenance of Way Employees struck a key section of the CSX Transportation network early Aug. 17 to protest the use of management personnel to perform duties covered by the union contract.

A federal court in Jacksonville, Fla., issued an injunction 11 hours later that ended the walkout. "We are shocked and appalled because (CSX) unexpectedly just went to a judge who without question gave it to them," said BMWE spokeswoman Sue Creswell. "We weren't afforded a hearing or anything."

The affected section of the railroad, the former Louisville and Nashville Railroad that connects Chicago with New Orleans via Louisville, Ky., Nashville, Tenn., and Birmingham and Mobile, Ala., has a history of contract violations, according to BMWE.

UNION NEWS

Iowa marks women's vote

The more than 200 delegates gathered for the 39th annual Iowa AFL-CIO convention in Waterloo celebrated the 75th anniversary of women's suffrage.

Lenore Miller, AFL-CIO vice president and president of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, was the keynote speaker of the commemorative luncheon.

Delegates also passed 17 resolutions on such issues as minimum wage, fair taxes, privatization, health care, corporate responsibility, economic development and prison labor.

Speakers included Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa); AFL-CIO COPE Regional Director Randall Kiser; Minnesota AFL-CIO President Bernard L. Brommer; South Dakota AFL-CIO President Jack E. Dudley; Richard Running, representative for the U.S. Department of Labor; Dave Nagle, former member of Congress from Iowa; and Gary Lamb, a "Road Warrior" from the Staley strike in Decatur, Ill., representing Paperworkers Local 7837.

N.M. raises per capita

Angel Fire, N.M.

Delegates to the New Mexico AFL-CIO 29th biennial convention increased the per capita tax for COPE from 3 percent to no less than 5 percent.

Delegates also participated in workshops on media relations and local unions' communication with other unions.

Speakers included Raymond Sanchez, speaker of the state House; Earl Potter, chairman of the state Democratic party; and Sam Collins, president of Union Savings Bank in Albuquerque.

EAPs salute labor

Representatives from labor-based employee assistance programs from Maine to Virginia gathered at the Employee Assistance Professional Association's District 1 conference in Baltimore recently to celebrate labor's contribution to this member benefit.

The "Salute to Labor" was kicked off by a plenary session on health care. Other events included a luncheon and a series of workshops on managed health care benefits and labor's commitment to member assistance programs.

Employee assistance programs offer a company's workers outside help in dealing with such problems as financial crises, substance abuse and mental illness.

Labor's man wins in Miss.

COPE-endorsed Dick Molpus garnered 77 percent of the vote in Mississippi's Democratic gubernatorial primary, easily defeating Shawn O'Hara.

Molpus' platform included a new crime-fighting plan and a reduction in Mississippi's 7 percent sales tax on groceries. The COPE-endorsed candidate for lieutenant governor, William Guy, was defeated.

Molpus will face incumbent Republican Gov. Kirk Fordice in the general election.



Photo by Jim West

Russian organizers get a taste of trade union life, American-style, on a UAW picket line in Van Buren Township, Mich., where workers are striking for a first contract with Bosch Co.

Russians on organizing course

Organizing study extends from classroom to field

By Muriel H. Cooper

A group of 20 union organizers from Russia recently completed two weeks of training in the United States, from the classrooms at the George Meany Center for Labor Studies to the organizing battlegrounds in Michigan and Georgia.

The Russians are part of a small, but blossoming, movement seeking to establish independent trade unions, often in conflict with the communist-era official trade unions that do not truly represent workers.

"In Russia, most of the workers belong to the official union," explained Leah Nayman, a program assistant with the Free Trade Union Institute, which hosted the group during their stay. "Their unions are really like company unions. They don't give workers a voice on the job."

Sometimes the workers don't get paid, benefits like sick leave are arbitrarily distributed and the union, which works hand-in-pocket with management, issues random disciplinary actions. The unions are the largest vestige of the old communist system. "They are very large and powerful," Nayman said.

The workers spent their first week at the Meany center focusing on the essential skills necessary for implementing an organizing plan and mobilizing members and non-members for actions around issues.

They had a chance to see the theory put into practice as they traveled to Detroit and the Atlanta area, getting a first-hand look at why trade unionism is important to U.S. workers, their families and their communities.

In Detroit, the visitors toured an automotive plant and sat in on a labor-management committee meeting, as well as visited the picket line where UAW members were striking for a first contract with Bosch Co. In Georgia, they toured poultry and catfish plants and accompanied Food and Commercial Workers' organizers during a campaign.

The hired "security guards" patroling the picket lines at Bosch were a reminder that workers in both countries have to stand up for their rights against powerful organizations.

Ellen Hamilton, a FTUI program assistant, said the Russians were surprised when they saw the struggles faced by unorganized workers, the animosity that surrounds many organizing drives and the tilted court system that favors business.

"When they are at home, it is hard for them to conceptualize how difficult it is for U.S. workers to protect their rights," she said. "But they now see that American workers have to fight to win the right not to run errands for the boss because he tells them to. They have to fight for dignity and respect.

"They also learned that union members can't rely on the legal system to redress the problems they face," Hamilton said. "The strength for all of us lies in organizing and group action. We think they will be able to use their skills back home, especially in similar situations."

The Russians' U.S. tour was funded by the George Meany Center for Labor Studies, the Agency for International Development and the Academy for Education Development.

Labor Day 1995 is a time of action for union members

Continued from Page 1

message will be buttressed with $1 million in radio and television ads condemning the Republican assault on workers, and an arsenal of materials that include banners, fliers, bumper stickers and posters reaffirming their commitment to "Stand UP for America's Working Families."

Donahue and Service Employees President John Sweeney will discuss the future direction of organized labor in three joint national media appearances during the Labor Day weekend — Aug. 30 on National Public Radio, Sept. 3 on NBC's Meet the Press and Sept. 4 on PBS's McNeil-Lehrer Report. The NPR and McNeil-Lehrer appearances will be taped in advance.

On Labor Day, Donahue will introduce President Clinton to Oakland-area union families attending the Alameda County AFL-CIO's annual picnic. Joining Donahue and Clinton will be Sweeney, President Doug Dority of the Food and Commercial Workers and other national, state and local union officers.

A mass rally Sept. 2 in Detroit in support of striking workers at the Detroit News and Detroit Free Press newspapers will send a clear message to union-busting companies like Gannett and Knight-Ridder, which forced the workers out on strike.

The Illinois AFL-CIO is "working on a number of fronts to plan activities for Labor Day because we had a legislature that acted like Congress," said Secretary-Treasurer Margaret Blackshere.

"Here in Chicago, we're celebrating the role of the immigrant in the labor movement with a parade, speeches and band concert in a Latino neighborhood," she said. "We are standing together to show corporations and Congress that we are united to fight what they are trying to do to working men and women."

Other activities in the state include a parade in Bloomington and a picnic in Peoria.

The traditional Labor Day celebrations are always motivating, said AFL-CIO Regional Director Ron Martin. In Mobile, Ala., for example, the parade has gotten so large that it is held on Saturday, usually with a standing-room-only crowd. The Asheville, N.C., Central Labor Council, one of the oldest CLCs in the country, sponsors a picnic and a parade, he said.

In Milwaukee, unionists will be gathering for the final dedication of a Workers' Memorial Park, which has been opened in parcels over the past few years. The dedication will be accompanied by a parade and a festival, from downtown Milwaukee to the lakefront.

New York City, with the largest parade in the country, has a "Families" theme this year. Other activities in the state include a Labor Day Mass in Buffalo, a picnic in Ithaca and a parade focusing on "Jobs, Votes and Equality" in Rochester.

In California, where the state legislature has acted in lockstep with the Republican-controlled Congress, picnics, brunches, parades and breakfasts are being held throughout the state.

"From Proposition 187 to the rescission of affirmative action programs in the state university system, we have had our share of divisive politics," said John Henning, executive secretary-treasurer of the California AFL-CIO. "During Labor Day we are going to focus on standing up for workers and their families against such divide-and-conquer politics."

"We will focus on the fact that labor is coming back in Montana," said Montana AFL-CIO Executive Secretary Donald R. Judge. "A number of unions from the public sector to the mining industry have won organizing victories. We had a couple of difficult decades, but workers are coming back to the only alternative they have to improve their plight in the workplace."

In Great Falls, some 2,000 people usually attend the picnic every year. Large picnics are also planned for Glendive, Billings and Missoula.

U.S. trade deficit sinks with NAFTA a major drain

By David Kameras

The U.S. merchandise trade deficit sank to another new low in June, at $14.9 billion the worst month in a miserable year.

When services are added into the mix, the deficit was $11.3 billion, just missing the $11.4 billion record set in April. The trade deficit in goods has been tens of billions of dollars every month this year.

AFL-CIO trade economist Gregory Woodhead pointed out that the June merchandise trade deficit was "a significant drag on the U.S. economy, which contributes to stagnant wages and to the loss of manufacturing jobs. Results-oriented U.S. trade policy is desperately needed to reduce this nation's huge and persistent trade imbalance."

The merchandise deficit with Japan improved, from $5.5 billion to $5.3 billion, at a time when many U.S. buyers were scared off by a temporary threat of new tariffs on Japanese luxury cars. But the deficit with China climbed from $2.8 billion to $3 billion, compared with $2.5 billion a year earlier.

During the first half of the year, the United States was on the short end of trade in trucks and cars ($28.6 billion), clothing and footwear ($20.9 billion), data processing and office machinery ($11.3 billion), electrical machinery ($9.3 billion), telecommunications equipment ($7.2 billion), iron and steel products ($4.4 billion), toys and sporting goods ($3.2 billion), furniture ($2.6 billion) and paper and paperboard ($1.1 billion).

Surpluses were recorded in airplanes and parts ($9.6 billion), general and specialized machinery ($0.7 billion) and power generating machinery ($0.1 billion).

Trade with Canada worsened dramatically, with the goods deficit moving from $864 million to $1.73 billion, largely because of the trade imbalance in autos and auto parts. According to a report by the Council on Competitiveness, U.S. exports in 1994 accounted for 6 percent of gross domestic product, the highest share in 23 years, but was far behind Canada's 21.7 percent.

As for Mexico, the other U.S. partner in the North American Free Trade Agreement, the merchandise trade gap continued to widen —from $1.63 billion to $1.65 billion, compared with a $223 million surplus a year earlier.

The collapse of the peso and preferential treatment under NAFTA have made cheap labor in the maquiladoras even cheaper, and accelerated the flow of U.S. capital investment south of the border, adding to America's loss of jobs and export opportunities.

According to a report by the WEFA economic forecasting group, as many as 160 additional plants will set up operations to take advantage of reduced operating costs. "By the end of 1996, the number of maquiladora plants is expected to exceed 2,250, their highest number ever."

In addition, the mix of goods being manufactured in the region is shifting increasingly toward high-value products like electronics and autos, items that create the kind of jobs the United States needs most. According to the Federal Reserve Bank in Dallas, 10 percent of Mexican manufacturing employment takes place in maquiladora plants.

The inability of workers to form independent trade unions has helped to keep wages depressed. The Mexican government twice has prevented workers at a Sony Corp. plant from registering a new union, despite complaints by the U.S. Labor Department, which was acting on petitions filed by labor-backed groups.

The ministerial consultations that resulted from those complaints are the highest level response available under NAFTA's labor side agreement. Workers there have been subjected to various forms of intimidation and organizers have been fired.

Similarly weak labor terms have apparently been offered to Chile in a bid to bring that country into a hemispheric trade bloc. Congressional Republicans have found even those terms unacceptable, and have delayed a vote on fast-track negotiating authority in the hope of exposing labor provisions to congressional amendment or elimination.

The need to link worker rights to trade agreements was stressed by AFL-CIO legislative representative William Cunningham in testimony submitted to the House Ways and Means subcommittee on trade, which is considering an extension of the Generalized System of Preferences.

Inclusion of worker rights in GSP "can be a powerful instrument to encourage the adoption of internationally recognized labor rights and standards, and thus support the basic premise of this government program to promote equitable economic growth and social progress in the less-developed world," Cunningham said.

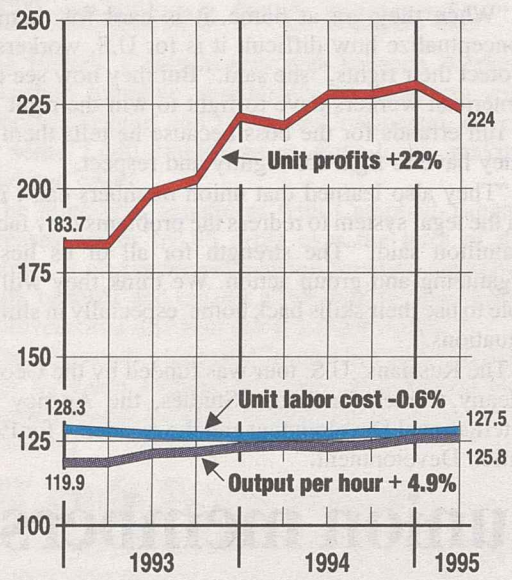
A GSP expansion should include improvements in the implementation of worker rights conditionality, the graduation of participant countries that are successful exporters, the exclusion of import-sensitive items, the elimination of competitive need for waivers, and a prohibition on the addition of China, a major human rights violator, to the program, he added.

DATA

Worker productivity

Labor costs vs. corporate profits*

Index 1982=100



*All corporations except banking, insurance and investment firms.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Real Earnings	
July	+0.8 percent
From July '94	+0.2 percent
Since 1979	-11.9 percent
Productivity (Manufacturing)	
June '94-June '95	+3.2 percent
Consumer Prices (CPI-W)	
July	+0.1 percent
July '94-July '95	+2.8 percent
Producer Prices (Finished Goods)	
July	Unchanged
June	-0.1 percent
Merchandise Trade Deficit	
June	$14.8 billion
May	$13.2 billion

AFL-CIO NEWSGRAFIC

Workers don't share productivity gain

The benefits of increased business productivity continue to elude the American worker.

Real average weekly earnings improved last month, rising 0.8 percent from June. But while workers had a little more spending money in the short term, their effective increase from a year ago was a scant 0.2 percent.

For those in manufacturing, average weekly earnings in constant dollars actually shrank 1.7 percent over the year. Compared with 15 years earlier, annual real weekly earnings in 1994 were down 11.9 percent.

And workers have been working harder for the dollars they get. Productivity rose 3 percent in the second quarter, up from 2.5 percent in the first three months. At the same time, unit labor costs crept up 0.6 percent, a tiny 0.4 percent for the 12-month period. In manufacturing, unit labor costs fell a seasonally adjusted 1.8 percent for the quarter, 0.4 percent for the 12 months.

"For the past two years, productivity growth has begun to rebound," observed Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich. "But wages for all but the upper tier of workers have remained stagnant — leading to my observation that, in these two years, productivity improvements have gone disproportionately into corporate profits."

In fact, among non-financial corporations, unit profits jumped 12.2 percent in 1994 and 14 percent in 1993, while unit labor costs actually dropped 0.6 percent in 1994 and were unchanged in 1993. Unit labor costs include executive, management and professional staff, whose salaries are typically much higher than hourly workers.

For the two-year period, output per hour rose 4.9 percent and unit profits skyrocketed 22 percent, while unit labor costs dropped nearly 1 percent.

"Wages haven't kept up with inflation, while the increase in profits has far outstripped inflation," said AFL-CIO chief economist Rudy Oswald.

Making up the change in real earnings was a 0.6 percent increase in average hourly earnings and a 0.3 percent rise in average weekly hours. Significantly, the offset for increased consumer prices was a tiny 0.1 percent, the same as in June, showing little sign of inflation, Oswald noted.

Consumer price increases were seen in housing (0.3 percent), medical care (0.3 percent), other goods and services (0.3 percent), food and beverages (0.2 percent, including a 0.6 percent jump in dairy products), fuel oil (0.2 percent), new vehicles (0.1 percent) and entertainment (0.1 percent). Prices decreased in gasoline (2.1 percent), used cars (1.1 percent), transportation (0.6 percent), auto finance charges (0.2 percent) and apparel and upkeep (0.1 percent).

"Wages for all but the upper tier of workers have remained stagnant . . . in these two years, productivity improvements have gone disproportionately into corporate profits."

— Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich

Finished goods, a precursor to retail trade, averaged no change in July, "continuing the stable pattern of the last several months," Oswald noted. "Food price increases were largely offset by energy drops. Without food and energy, the price advance was a modest 0.2 percent — the same as last month and in most other months after January."

The gross domestic product grew an annualized 0.5 percent in the second quarter, the weakest performance in nearly four years.

In another sign of a slowing economy, the index of leading indicators was up a scant 0.2 percent in June, the first increase this year.

Improvements were made in money supply, stock prices, consumer confidence, initial weekly state unemployment insurance claims, average workweek, building permits, new orders for plant and equipment and unfilled orders for consumer goods. On the down side were raw material prices, unfilled orders for durable goods for manufacturers and business delivery times.

Factory orders declined a modest 0.2 percent in June, and orders for capital goods dropped 1 percent.

Sales of new homes rose 6.1 percent in June, following a 12.5 percent increase in May.

According to AFL-CIO economist Anne Draper, the estimated poverty line (CPI-U) in July was $15,580 for a four-person family, or $7.49 an hour, unchanged from June.

— David Kameras

Wu convicted, then expelled

Human rights activist Harry Wu was convicted of spying and sentenced to 15 years in prison, but then was abruptly expelled from China.

The Clinton administration had strongly denied the spying charges, and the AFL-CIO had accused the Chinese government of trying to suppress information about its forced labor conditions, which Wu had sought to bring to light.

Wu, a U.S. citizen, was met at the San Francisco airport by family and friends, including Jeffrey Fiedler, secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO Food and Allied Service Trades Department and a director of Wu's Laogai Research Foundation. Wu has worked closely with the AFL-CIO in helping to expose the use of Chinese forced labor to produce goods sold in U.S. stores.

"Unwittingly, the Chinese government has broadcast Harry Wu's cause to the whole world," said Kenneth Hutchison, executive director of the AFL-CIO's Asian American Free Labor Institute. "Now that he is again free, it is time for governments and people to pay much more attention to what he has to say about the brutalities of China's labor camps and the part they play in underpinning the communist system."

The AFL-CIO Executive Council in August called for a nationwide grass-roots effort to free Wu, saying he represents "millions of faceless and nameless ordinary people," who are the victims of the Chinese government's violation of its citizen's most basic human rights.

Wu's arrest further strained relations between the United States and China, but his release "does not change in the slightest China's human rights policy or dreadful prison practices," said AFL-CIO International Affairs Director Charles Gray. "There's no reason to applaud China for releasing Harry Wu when they had no business arresting him in the first place."

Wu's release came as China was preparing to host the United Nations Conference on Women and a U.S. delegation expected to be headed by Hillary Rodham Clinton. The AFL-CIO has urged a boycott of the conference because of the harsh treatment endured by Chinese women.

Nigeria protest planned

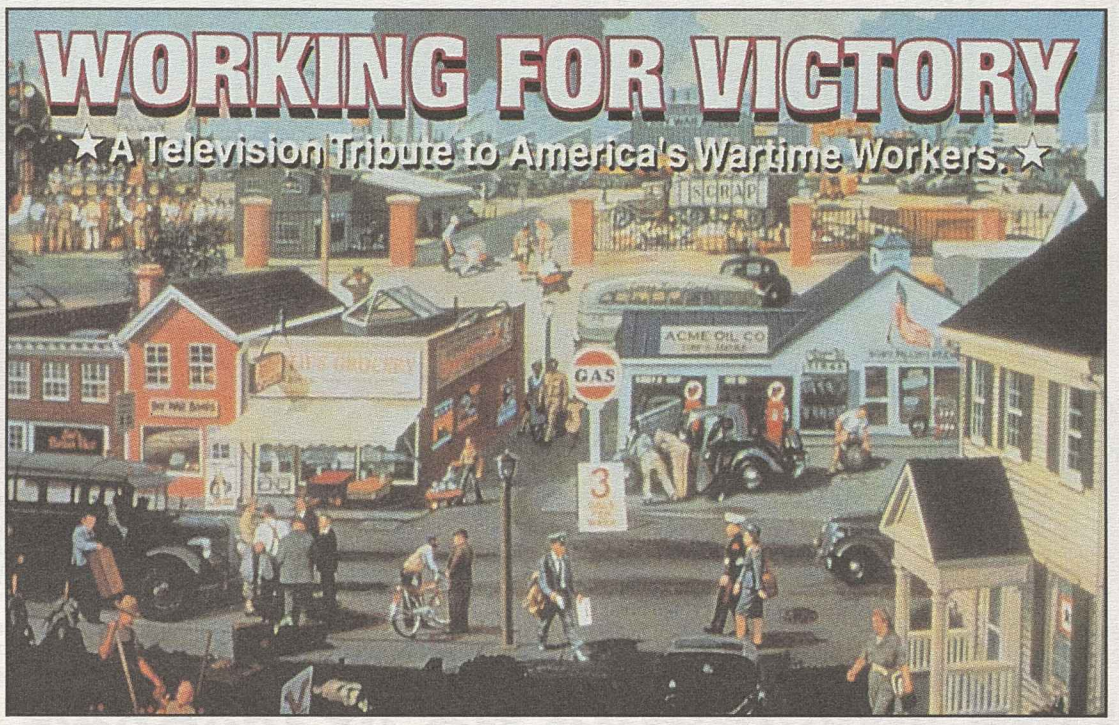
A mass demonstration to protest the abusive policies of Nigeria's military dictatorship has been called for Aug. 30 by the AFL-CIO and TransAfrica, along with the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, the International Human Rights Law Group and the Washington, D.C., chapter of the NAACP.

NEWSMAKERS

Carpenters President **Sigurd Lucassen**, 68, said he will not seek re-election as president of the union. The Carpenters announced that Lucassen had told the union's general executive board that he will nominate **Douglas McCarron**, the union's second vice-president, to succeed him as president. Lucassen also plans to nominate a full slate of officers prior to the union's Sept. 25 Las Vegas convention, including **Jim Patterson**, UBC's general secretary, to become secretary-treasurer if the convention approves the merger of the two positions. Lucassen began his career as a union carpenter in 1952 and rose through the ranks that culminated with his 1988 election as president of his union. He will serve out his current term, which ends in mid-November.

Paschal McGuinness, the Carpenters' first vice president, announced he will be running for secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department on a slate with incumbent President **Robert A. Georgine.** McGuinness announced his candidacy after the retirement of **Joseph F. Maloney**, who served as secretary-treasurer of the department for 20 years. A member of the Iron Workers, Maloney began his trade union career as an organizer and national contract negotiator before being tapped as secretary-treasurer of the building trades in 1975.

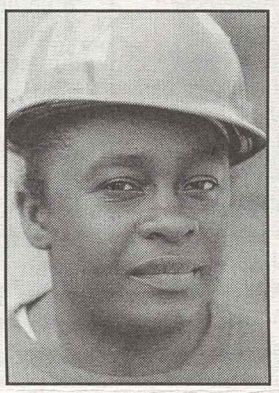
Laborers President **Arthur A. Coia** appointed **Donald J. Kaniewski** as legislative and political director. Kaniewski succeeds **Jack Curran**, who retired after a 30-year career with the union. Kaniewski will direct the legislative and political action programs of the union.



Workers' stories on television

Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, American working men and women worked to feed, clothe and arm the 13 million troops who served in World War II.

That story of the lives and work of those on the homefront during the war is told in the Labor Institute of Public Affairs' one-hour documentary, **Working for Victory**. It will air on hundreds of television stations over the Labor Day weekend. Award-winning actor Carroll O'Connor, who served as a merchant seaman during the war, narrates the program.



Betty Dumas

Also showing on Public Broadcasting System stations during the holiday is **Ties That Bind**, a special from "We Do The Work" that focuses on the problems of democratic rights in the American workplace.

"This is America. Something is wrong," says Betty Dumas, a pipefitter at Avondale Shipyards who describes the problems examined in **Ties That Bind**. "We had an election at Avondale two years ago. The people voted the union in. When you vote for president, once he's voted in, he's given a seat. Why is it taking so long for the union to come in?"

The program describes how, two days after 13 nurses at Mountain View Hospital in Gadsden, Ala., attended a union meeting in the home of psychiatric nurse Connie McMillan, 10 of the workers were fired.

"I felt there's no way we'd lose our jobs," McMillan says. "It's our right to belong to a union. I can't believe it could really happen. I was in a state of shock."

Ties That Bind also examines corporate efforts to keep work forces "union-free," impacting both workers and their communities.

"It affected families, their neighbors, the guy across the street who is looking at his own job," says newspaper editor Ginny Wray about Tultex's 16-year effort to keep the Clothing and Textile Workers out of its Martinsville, Va., plant.

"The only way to bust a union is to lie, distort, manipulate, threaten and always, always attack," Marty Levitt, author of "Confessions of a Union Buster," said in an interview.

Working for Victory marks the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II — a war that brought dramatic change to the nation's workplaces and communities. Hundreds of thousands of planes, tank ships and supplies were the "miracles of production" achieved by this wartime work force.

One lasting impact on the nation's workplaces was the emergence of fringe benefits. With profits soaring and wages frozen, the War Labor Board cooperated in the development of pensions, health care and paid vacations as earned benefits.

"I never heard a worker say, 'I can't do it.' We felt like we were in battle," says one worker at an airplane plant. Textile worker Irene Vierira remembers, "It brought everybody together. We were all working toward the same goal and the same cause."

For information on **Working for Victory** show times in your area, contact LIPA at 800/242-8646. Check your local PBS station listings for the time and channel of **Ties That Bind.**

RESOURCES

CONFERENCES

The first joint conference of labor groups representing women, people of color and youth will be held Oct. 20-21, 1995, at the Sheraton New York Hotel and Towers. The conference will explore the theme, **Building on Diversity/Achieving Full Participation**. Contact the AFL-CIO Civil Rights Department at 202/637-5270.

The Universal Health Care Action Network is sponsoring its fifth national conference, **Health Care for All of Us — Analysis and Strategies for Hard Times**. The conference will be held Sept. 30-Oct. 1 at the Sheraton National Hotel, Columbia Pike and Washington Boulevard, Arlington, Va. Contact UHCAN at 216/241-8422 or 800/634-4442.

AIDS in the Workplace Institute, sponsored by the George Meany Center for Labor Studies, will be held Oct. 1-6 at the center, 10000 New Hampshire Ave., Silver Spring, Md., 20903. Contact Brenda R. Moon at 202/637-5331.

The AFL-CIO Human Resources Development Institute's annual conference, The American Work Force in Transition, will be held Dec. 17-19, 1995, at the Buena Vista Palace Hotel, Walt Disney World Village, Orlando, Fla. The conference will focus on training, education, job placement and creation and workplace change. Contact Carol Claggett at 202/638-3912.

CONVENTION

The eighth biennial convention of the **Coalition of Labor Union Women** will be held Oct. 12-15 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Dearborn, Mich. A pre-convention conference will be held on Oct. 12 on "Surviving and Thriving as a Labor Union Woman in America: 1995 and Beyond." Contact Chrystl L. Bridgeforth, executive director of CLUW, at 202/466-4610.

PUBLICATIONS

The following books are available from the Bureau of National Affairs: **Basic Patterns in Union Contracts** provides data on various contract topics gathered from 400 contracts that will help negotiators evaluate agreements, proposals and counterproposals; **Organizing and the Law** provides information on legal aspects of organizing; and **Construction Craft Jurisdiction Agreements** gives detailed information on agreements within different crafts of the construction industry. Write BNA Books, P.O. Box 7814, Edison, N.J., 08818-7814; or call 800/960-1220.



Photo by Mike Meadows

AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue and Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling meet with UNITE members in Los Angeles Aug. 23 to discuss the sweatshop conditions in the garment industry.

Thai sweatshop tip of iceberg

By Muriel H. Cooper

Americans were shocked to learn about the 70 illegal Thai workers toiling in slave-like conditions in Los Angeles, but the case is not unusual, the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees said.

"The recent revelation of immigrant apparel workers in California treated as slaves has justifiably focused the nation's attention on the shameful conditions that are all too prevalent throughout the industry," said UNITE President Jay Mazur.

Federal and state agents on Aug. 2 raided a guarded El Monte apartment compound confined by high walls and topped with barbed wire. Lured to America with promises of making a lot of money, the workers, almost all women, were forced to work 17-hour shifts, some for as long as seven years, for less than $2 a day.

The workers were threatened with rape, death or retaliation against their families in Thailand if they stopped churning out garments for major retail stores, from Montgomery Ward to Neiman Marcus.

"We were appalled at the sight" of the slave labor sweatshop, said Labor Department Secretary Robert B. Reich. "Many of us continue to shake our heads in shock and disbelief that this could happen in this country in the 1990s . . . The retail clothing industry is also shocked."

UNITE and Sweatshop Watch, a coalition of community, civil rights and religious organizations, helped the workers gain their freedom and offered legal counsel. "They had no idea about their rights," said Steve Nutter, a vice president for UNITE. Immigration and Labor Department officials freed 74 of the workers.

Eight Thais are charged with running the sweatshop and harboring and smuggling immigrants. The charge carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison and a $250,000 fine.

The Labor Department is seeking $5 million from clothing makers linked to the sweatshop. The department also plans to ask the manufacturers to "accept responsibility for a share of the $5 million in wages owed to the Thai workers" under a 40-year-old "hot goods" provision in the Fair Labor Standards Act.

"The significance of these back wages goes beyond this case," said Reich. "When these contractors stoop to hiring illegal workers held in bondage, they also steal wages from pockets of working Americans. We're going to do everything the law allows to recoup these wages."

"We have long encouraged Department of Labor enforcement efforts that insist on retailers and large manufacturers assuming responsibility for the conditions under which their goods are produced," said Mazur. "It is fiction that multibillion-dollar global corporations do not possess the resources to inform themselves of the conditions under which the goods they sell are produced. They do, and they must."

The workers sewed women's clothing sold in department stores that include Macy's, Filene's, Hecht's and Famous-Barr. At least two of the chains, Mervyn's and Ward, were subpoenaed by the state of California, where garment manufacturers are liable for violations by their contractors if those contractors are unregistered.

"We fought for legislation to make all manufacturers and some retailers legally responsible for wages lost in sweatshops. Gov. Pete Wilson vetoed it," Nutter said, stressing that if the governor were not so "soft on sweatshops," the manufacturers might have taken steps to monitor the situation and prevent this tragedy.

"Had the governor signed the joint-liability legislation . . . the public would be assured that justice would be done, that manufacturers would be accountable when they used sweatshops, and that retailers would not sell clothes tainted with slavery," said Nutter.

Manufacturers and retailers denied knowledge of the sweatshop, the Labor Department pointed out. "Either they said 'call my attorney' or said 'you won't get a fight out of me,' " he said.

The manufacturers named by the DoL are: F40 California Inc., Tomato Inc., L.F. Sportswear, Ms. Tops of California, Balmara Inc., New Boys Inc./Voltage Inc., Point Zero, Excuses sportswear, Paragraff Clothing Co., Bermo Enterprises, A&M Casuals, US Boys, B.U.M. International and Diane Samandi (the "Jonquil" label).

The retailers named are: Foley's Petites, Macy's West, Meier & Frank, Robinson's, May, Hecht's, Filene's, Kaufman's, Neiman-Marcus, Dayton-Hudson, Mervyn's, Broadway, Rich's Specialty Retailers Inc., Montgomery Ward, Sears, Fred Meyer, Venture and Lerner.

May, Federated Department Stores and Sears, three of the nation's largest retailers, plan to participate in a September "garment summit" organized by Reich to discuss monitoring of contract shops.

UNITE's sweatshop fight as old as 20th century

The needle trades unions, now merged into a single UNITE, have been fighting throughout this century to end sweatshop conditions for immigrants, women and children.

"The crisis has existed for many years," said Katie Quan, a manager for UNITE in the Pacific Northwest District Council. "Our union was born among immigrant workers. We have been at the forefront in fighting for worker rights and dignity for all workers here and abroad."

The fight has moved into the international sphere because garment and textile companies were among the first to "run away" to low-wage havens, first in the U.S. South and then overseas. It is part of the problem that has left U.S. families with stagnant wages.

"The passage of NAFTA and GATT simply exacerbates the problem, giving employers more freedom to exploit workers worldwide," said Quan.

Last month, UNITE sponsored a U.S. tour by two Central American teenagers, who recounted the abuses they suffered daily working for a U.S. employer in the so-called "Free-Trade Zone" for pennies a day.

"UNITE cannot and will not rest until the sweatshop is eliminated from our city and wherever it thrives in the new global economy," said UNITE President Jay Mazur.

— Muriel H. Cooper

AFL-CIO NEWS

VOLUME 40, NUMBER 18 AUGUST 28, 1995

INSIDE



Daymon Hartley/TNG

'My daddy is irreplaceable' reads the sign of one youngster on the picket line outside the Detroit newspapers. Unions are rallying around the families of striking workers. **See story, Page 1.**

LEGISLATION

1 *Stand UP TV ads boost lobbying effort*

UNION NEWS

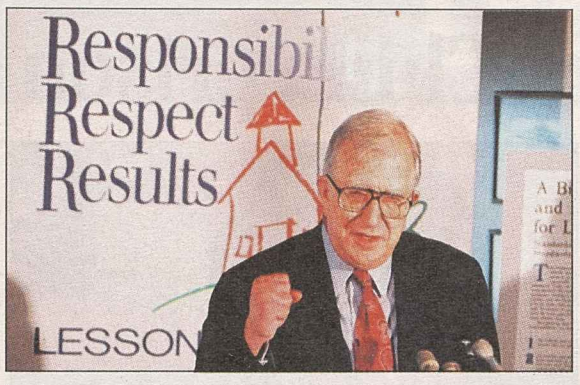
7 *CWA presses drive against Bell Atlantic*

UNION YES

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Back to school for AFT means the three R's – two campaigns to improve education. **See story, Page 7.**

AFL-CIO NEWS

VOLUME 40, NUMBER 19 SEPTEMBER 11, 1995

'Union' is the message

Labor Day spotlights needs of U.S. workers

By Colleen M. O'Neill

Organized labor rose to the occasion this Labor Day, bringing the good news of unions and the bad news of the Republican Congress into American households.

From the picnics in the heartland to the marches in Northeastern cities, from television news shows and campaign ads to proclamations and speeches, labor was a central part of the national conversation.

"Unions are the only hope (workers) have for dignity on the job, for a voice on the job, for democracy on the job. It's that simple," said AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue on NBC-TV's "Meet the Press."

A poll released by Time Magazine showed that some 68 percent of Americans believe unions "are absolutely necessary in this nation." The reason for that overwhelming support, Donahue said, is that unions "advance not just the interest of their members, but the interest of workers generally."

The AFL-CIO intends to keep labor on the cutting edge of public debate with its campaign to Stand UP for America's Working Families, Donahue said during an interview on CNN's "Inside Politics."

"Right now we have a new program going on to increase our grass-roots activities and penetration," he said. "We're spending about $3 million on grass roots, on television advertising to get down to the district level and to try to convince Republican congressmen who are voting against the interest of working people that they're doing the wrong thing. That's not why they're there."

President Clinton echoed that message in an appearance with Donahue, Presidents John J. Sweeney of the Service Employees, Lenore Miller of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, George Kourpias of the Machinists and other labor officials at the 38th Labor Day picnic celebrated by the Alameda

Continued on Page 4

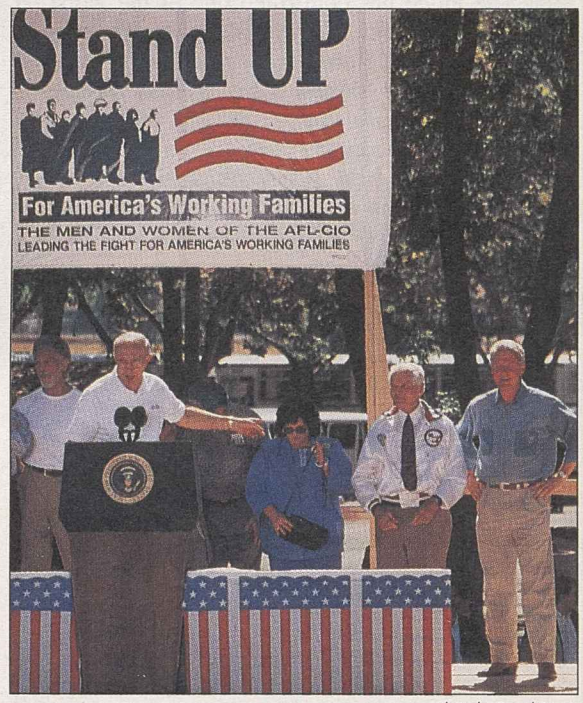


Photo by David Bacon

AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue introduces President Clinton at Alameda County, Calif., AFL-CIO picnic.

Workers go to barricades for job safety

Congress returns with more threats to OSHA

By Colleen M. O'Neill

As Congress promised to do more damage to the nation's job safety laws, trade unionists vowed to continue to hold lawmakers' feet to the fire over the crucial workplace issue.

During the August recess, some 75 union members rallied outside the Pickens, S.C., Administration Building where Reps. Cass Ballenger (R-N.C.) and Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) held a "field hearing" on Ballenger's bill, H.R. 1834. The bill would turn the Occupational Safety and Health Administration from an enforcement agency to a consultant to employers, while stripping worker rights and vital safety and health protections.

"They're trying to destroy the safety of workplaces where working families go to work every day," South Carolina AFL-CIO President G.O. Smoak said of the bill's backers. "We're going to do whatever we have to do to see that they don't get away with this."

The bill would make compliance with many current safety and health regulations voluntary, and apply cost-benefit and risk-assessment standards to pending and existing rules. In addition, H.R. 1834 would repeal the Mine Safety and Health Act and merge the Mine Safety and Health Administration with OSHA, subjecting miners to watered-down safety standards.

The campaign takes on a new urgency with the circulation of "elements" for a new substitute OSHA bill expected to be introduced this month by Sen. Nancy L. Kassebaum (R-Kan.), the chair of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee. The draft outline of legislation draws several parallels to Ballenger's measure.

While specifics of the Kassebaum bill are not fully known, AFL-CIO safety and health director Peg

Continued on Page 3



Daymon J. Hartley/The Detroit Journal

Striking newspaper workers and their supporters march Sept. 2 to the Sterling Heights, Mich., printing plant, where for 12 hours they blocked distribution of the Sunday Detroit News and Free Press.

NLRB, solidarity good news in Detroit

By James B. Parks

In a massive show of solidarity over the Labor Day weekend, national labor leaders, striking Detroit newspaper employees and their supporters completely disrupted distribution of scab editions of the Free Press and News.

Meanwhile, the National Labor Relations Board delivered a victory for the strikers when its regional director ruled Aug. 31 that the two-month walkout was the result of the newspapers' unfair labor practices.

If the ruling is upheld, the companies would not be allowed to hire permanent replacements and striking workers would be entitled to their jobs back when the dispute is settled. The company claims it has hired more than 1,000 replacement workers since the strike began July 13.

The NLRB also plans to issue an unfair labor practice complaint against four newspapers elsewhere in Michigan for refusing to hire pressmen on strike against the Detroit papers who were seeking temporary work at the other papers. The four papers all are owned by Booth Newspapers, a division of The Herald Co.

At a mass rally Sept. 2 in support of the strikers, AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue proclaimed, "we'll make Knight-Ridder and Gannett pay a price every bit as dear as the price they seek to impose on you."

"From coast to coast, and everywhere in between, we will carry your story forward. And we will continue for as long as it takes to win," Donahue said. "Like the strikers at the New York Daily News, the Pittsburgh Press and the San Francisco Chronicle, we will prevail," he said.

Donahue was joined by a host of national labor

Continued on Page 6

COURTS

Sprint ruling appealed

The Communications Workers will appeal an administrative law judge's ruling that Sprint Corp.'s decision to close its Spanish-language telemarketing unit, La Conexion Familiar, was lawful.

Although ALJ Gerald Wacknov sustained 50 charges against Sprint managers for repeatedly spying on, coercing and threatening workers at the company during a union drive, he refused to order reinstatement or back pay for the former employees.

"The judge has confirmed one of the worst cases of anti-union lawbreaking we've ever seen in the telecommunications industry," said CWA President Morton Bahr. "Merely forcing Sprint to promise not to threaten to close a facility they've already closed is no remedy at all for these workers. If this ruling stands as the last word in this case, Sprint Corp. will have gotten away scot-free with its brutal and blatantly illegal behavior."

The notoriously anti-union Sprint closed La Conexion Familiar on July 14, 1994, and fired 235 workers, the majority of whom were Hispanic, eight days before a union election.

Wage law overturned

A California county law requiring employers to pay prevailing wages on certain private construction projects over $500,000 is pre-empted by the National Labor Relations Act, a federal appeals court ruled.

The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors exceeded its authority in 1990 when it passed an ordinance requiring all contractors to pay the prevailing wage before getting a permit in the county.

By regulating the pay on private projects as well as public, the board stepped into areas covered by collective bargaining, which is pre-empted by federal law, said Judge Proctor Hug Jr., who wrote the opinion. Although federal Davis-Bacon and state prevailing wage laws on public projects are not pre-empted by the NLRA, Hug said, the government is acting in those projects as proprietor, not as a regulator.

TV case nets back pay

More than 100 employees of NBC will receive about $500,000 in back pay after a federal appeals court ruled they should get double pay for work days over 12 hours for the period between April 1990 and February 1991.

The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled Aug. 30 that the workers represented by the Communications Workers' Broadcast Employees and Technicians should have been paid double time as required by California Law.

The court rejected NBC's claim that it should follow federal requirements to pay time-and-a-half for network employees in California and at the wholly-owned KNBC affiliate in Los Angeles.

A previous contract expired March 31, 1990. The network declared an impasse Aug. 15, 1990, and implemented some of its proposals until a new agreement was reached in February 1991. That agreement expired March 31, 1994.

Wu undeterred by China prison

Vows to continue fight to expose rights abuses

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

Human rights activist Harry Wu, surviving a second attempt by China to muzzle him, compared Chinese labor camps to Nazi gas chambers.

"Not much unlike the gas chambers Hitler used in Germany, China has spiritual gas chambers," Wu said. The goal in Chinese labor camps, he said, is to "kill your brain so that you become a robot. The Nazis divided by race, but China divides by communist theory to control your mind."

In a Sept. 5 visit to AFL-CIO headquarters, Wu recounted how he was convicted of spying and sentenced to 15 years in prison before being abruptly expelled from China on Aug. 24. "I was beaten, given medicine that made me sick, forbidden to practice my religion and watched by three guards as I used the toilet."

"During those 66 days, I felt like I was a king from Africa. I was even escorted around town by seven cars."

Eventually, Wu said, in a step that inadvertently turned him from despair and which may have saved his life, Chinese officials gave him some reading material, including Ernest Hemingway's "The Old Man and the Sea," Herman Melville's "Moby Dick" and an issue of the International Herald Tribune.

Although they checked every page of the newspaper, they overlooked an opinion piece by former secretary of state Henry Kissinger containing an almost parenthetical reference to "the fate of Harry Wu over there," said Wu. It was at that moment he realized there was a movement abroad to free him.

After reading Kissinger's article, Wu said he realized the Chinese government probably "wanted to get me out as soon as possible." International pressure is the only reason the Chinese abruptly decided to release him without making him serve his sentence, Wu said.

But his conviction "doesn't mean I stop my fight," Wu said. Although China ultimately can only be changed by the Chinese people, the labor movement and Americans across the country can boycott products made by forced labor in China to continue to bring attention to the problems, he explained. But, most importantly, "we must speak out against human rights abuse every time there is an opportunity."

Wu has worked closely with the AFL-CIO in helping to expose the use of Chinese forced labor to produce goods sold in U.S. stores. Through his nonprofit human rights organization, Laogai Research Foundation, he has documented abuses in China's labor camps and "let people know the truth about the political machinery in China."

Prior to his arrest three months ago, he had made several trips to China, visiting some 27 labor camps. Undeterred by threats from the Chinese government, Wu, who has testified numerous time before Congress, testified again Sept. 8 on China's human rights abuses.

The AFL-CIO Executive Council in August called for a nationwide grass-roots effort to free Wu, saying he represents "millions of faceless and nameless ordinary people," who are victims of the Chinese government's violation of its citizens' most basic human rights.



"I was beaten, given medicine that made me sick, forbidden to practice my religion and watched by three guards as I used the toilet."

— Harry Wu

Wu's release came as China was preparing to host the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, which was attended by Hillary Rodham Clinton. Wu said he thought it was "very important that she attend and make a statement against China's human rights abuses."

He praised the first lady for denouncing human rights abuse around the world in her Sept. 5 speech in Beijing. "We must recognize that women will never gain full dignity until their human rights are respected and protected," Clinton said.

Pointing to the goal of strengthening families and society, Clinton added that "empowering women to take greater control over their own destinies cannot be fully achieved unless all governments — here and around the world — accept their responsibility to protect and promote internationally recognized human rights."

The Chinese government wanted to use Clinton's attendance at the conference as a propaganda ploy but it backfired, Wu said. "I wanted her to strongly denounce China's human rights abuses and she did. She deserves our praise. . . . She stood up and reaffirmed our commitment."

The struggle has been a lifelong one for Wu, who was first arrested in 1960 for criticizing the 1956 Soviet invasion of Hungary and was sentenced to life for refusing to admit guilt. He was released in 1979 and emigrated to the United States in 1985.

His unpopularity with China's ruling elite has been heightened by two books he has written on human rights. One, "Bitter Winds," deals with his own experience, and the other, "Laogai — the Chinese Gulag," describes the system of prison labor camps he endured for 19 years. The AFL-CIO was the first to publish Wu's map locating those labor camps — first in the International Affairs Department's Bulletin and then in the AFL-CIO News.

AFL-CIO NEWS

Director of Information: Rex Hardesty

Editor: Michael Byrne

Assistant Editors: David Kameras, Colleen M. O'Neill, James B. Parks

Staff Writers: Muriel H. Cooper, Mike Hall, Sharolyn A. Rosier

Graphics/Layout: Stan Hitt, Hindi M. Fracasse

AFL-CIO Press Secretary: Candice Johnson

AFL-CIO Headquarters: 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006
Telephone: (202) 637-5010 • CompuServe: 71112,53 • Internet: http://www.aflcio.org

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THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE AFL-CIO
LEADING THE FIGHT FOR AMERICA'S WORKING FAMILIES

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AFGE concerned budget fight to bring 'lockout'

Promised pay raise cut adding to insecurity

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

The drastic budget cuts sought by Republican leaders in Congress have put federal workers behind the 8 ball, facing a possible government shutdown Oct. 1.

To make matters worse, a promised 5.1 percent federal pay raise for 1996 has been reduced to no more than 2.4 percent under a proposal put forth by President Clinton.

If the 13 spending bills authorizing 1996 spending levels are not approved and signed into law before Oct. 1, Congress could pass a continuing resolution to keep the government operating. However, it also could send home without pay nearly 2 million federal workers — all but those classified "essential," and even those workers would not get paid until later.

"Government workers are being used as bargaining chips in a political game of 'chicken' between the president and the Republican Congress," Government Employees President John N. Sturdivant said in a Labor Day statement.

"Even as the nation recovers from the horror of the apparent anti-government attack in Oklahoma City, our own lawmakers seem to be capitalizing on the same destructive rhetoric," he said.

Clinton already has told Congress he will veto a number of appropriations bills if the language remains unchanged. The budget reconciliation bill would significantly cut federal retirement and health care benefits while giving tax breaks to corporations and the wealthy.

Some of the appropriations bills also require the elimination of whole agencies and major cuts in jobs and programs. Thus far, the House and Senate have reconciled differences in one appropriations bill, which funds Congress and its related agencies.

"Congress is trying to hold federal employees hostage" to force the administration to agree to sharp cuts in government social services, Sturdivant added. "I don't think there is any way that a shutdown can be avoided."

Clinton's strategy should be to aggressively pursue a continuing resolution that will keep the government going temporarily even if there is no agreement on the appropriations bills, Sturdivant said. "Then we will see if the Republicans will go along with it, and the American public will know whom to blame if they don't."

To help prepare AFGE members for a possible shutdown, the union is preparing an instruction manual along with a list of services provided by AFGE. If there is a furlough, Sturdivant warned, Congress will not be receptive to providing retroactive pay to federal employees as they did after the Columbus Day weekend shutdown in 1990.

"We consider this to be a lockout" of government employees from their jobs, he said.

On the pay issue, Clinton noted in an Aug. 31 letter that if he had failed to act, general schedule federal employees entitled to locality pay would receive a pay increase of 5.1 percent in 1996, with total pay amounting to $2 billion more than proposed in the administration's 1996 budget plan.

Federal law allows the president to submit an alternative pay plan to Congress to forestall pay raises for federal employees that would otherwise take effect automatically.

Clinton said that "economic conditions affecting the general welfare" dictate a pay increase lower than that 5.1 percent raise. "The budget discipline that my administration has put in place has contributed to sustained economic growth and low inflation," he wrote.

The federal workers' cause was championed Sept. 3 by AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue and Service Employees President John J. Sweeney, appearing jointly on NBC-TV's "Meet the Press." Calling for federal health care and retirement benefits, as well as to slash budgets for agencies and departments.

the full 5.1 percent pay raise, they pointed to high worker productivity and numerous alternatives to addressing the budget issues.

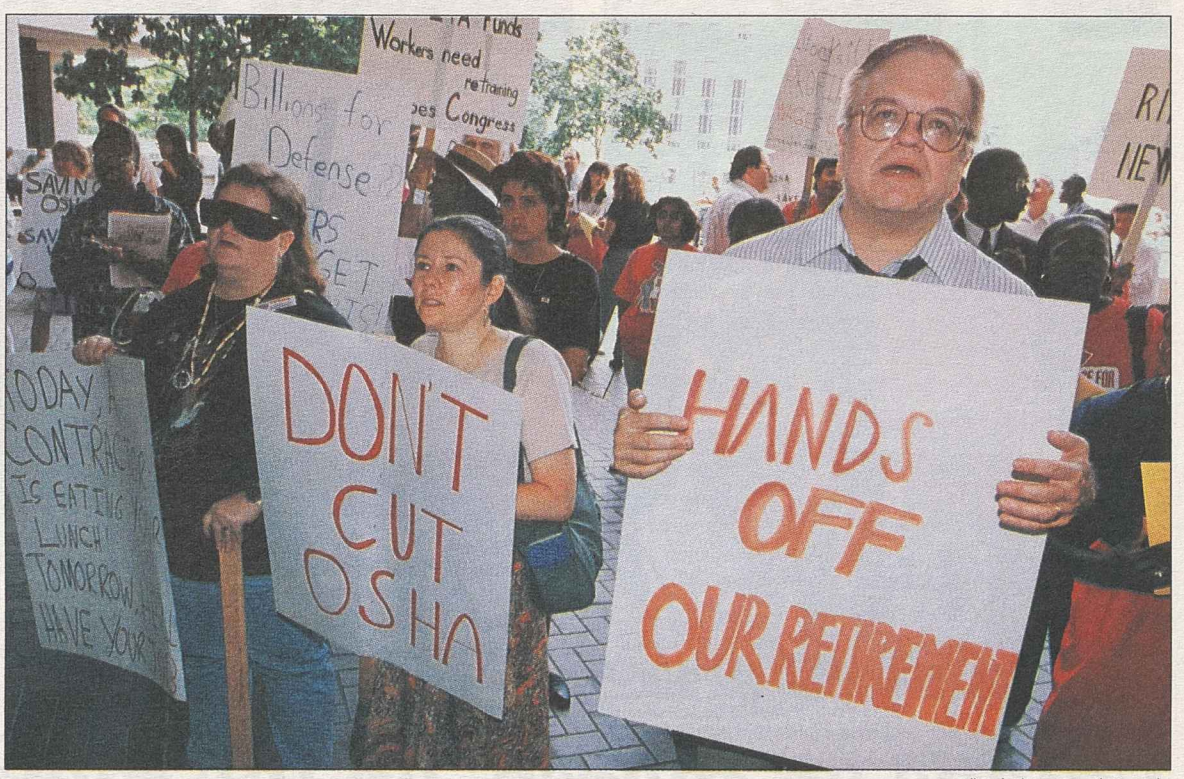
The proposed 2.4 percent raise matches the pay increase for military personnel proposed in the administration's 1996 budget, which Congress likely will approve in the Department of Defense authorization bill, the president noted.

Of the 2.4 percent pay increase, 2 percent will be devoted to increases in the statutory pay scale for federal employees, with the additional 0.4 percent designated for locality pay adjustments for eligible employees.

Meanwhile, 22 House members requested a hearing on the economic effects of a possible government shutdown. In an Aug. 4 letter to House Government Reform and Oversight Committee Chairman Bill Clinger (R-Pa), the members asked the committee to hold hearings on H.R. 2007, a measure that would mitigate the effects of a government shutdown.

Rep. Albert R. Wynn (D-Md.) also is expected to introduce legislation to keep paying workers even if there is a politically produced lockout.

Only services necessary for protection of safety or property against imminent threat would continue in the event of a furlough. Government employees with jobs in air traffic control, the U.S. Postal Service, crime prevention and food safety inspection would be expected to work even if the federal government shuts down, according to an administration memo.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Federal workers protest outside the Labor Department, condemning congressional Republican plans to cut

Recess campaign focuses on worker safety and health

Continued from Page 1

Seminario said that "from what we've seen, it would definitely be a bill to weaken OSHA."

Workplace safety was the focus of the $1 million ad campaign waged by the AFL-CIO during the August recess. It featured Ron Hayes of Fairhope, Ala., the father of a victim of lax enforcement of workplace standards, who also testified at the Ballenger hearing in South Carolina.

"We need a stronger OSHA, not a weaker one," he said. "We have too many employers in this country who think of employees as disposable machinery."

The television and radio ads, which told the story of Hayes' son, Patrick, were run in 26 congressional districts during the recess. The ads were supplemented by various rallies, Labor Day observances, marches, protests and meetings with members of Congress at home in their districts.

For example, Sen. Byron L. Dorgan (D-N.D.) assured labor in an August letter that, while he was open to changes in OSHA, he opposed the elimination of the agency. Rep. Michael Flanagan (R-Ill.), a frequent target of union protests, told unionists at a Legislative Action Committee meeting in mid-August he would not vote for outright repeal of OSHA.

More than 80 meetings have been held with members of Congress since the first recess in April. Many of the August meetings focused on the damage not only to workplace safety, but to other budget cuts in programs that benefit working families.

The Senate is due to take up the Labor/HHS/Education appropriations soon after returning from the recess, but a timetable remains uncertain for the markup of H.R. 1834 in Ballenger's subcommittee, or for a possible Kassebaum measure in the Senate.

Seminario warned that a Kassebaum proposal that might not be "as broad as Ballenger's still would pose very significant problems for workers." The draft outline of the Kassebaum plan included these elements:

- Inclusion of "TEAM Act" principles that could lead to the formation of company unions.
- Codifying the existing on-site consultation program for small employers.
- Reducing penalties for non-serious violations and overturning the egregious penalty policy, which drew attention to violations affecting large numbers of employees.
- Issuing warnings in lieu of citations in many circumstances.
- Permitting employers to conduct periodic and pre-employment drug testing of employees, as well as testing for those employees involved in work-related accidents.
- Requiring employees to complain to their employer before calling OSHA, in cases where employers have established an anonymous complaint process.
- Codifying the "abandonment" by OSHA of agency incentives for compliance officers for the number of inspections conducted, the number of citations issued or the amount of fines collected.
- Relieving general contractors of responsibility for worksite safety in construction.
- Abolishing the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.
- Increasing funding for consultation services.



Keith Mestrich/AFL-CIO

Trade unionists plan strategy during a congressional field hearing in Pickens, S.C., on a bill to gut OSHA.



Photo by Elizabeth Robertson



Jack Miller/Miller Photography

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling joined officials at the Southern New Jersey AFL-CIO for the 101st annual tribute to Peter J. McGuire, the Carpenter who proposed the Labor Day holiday more than 100 years ago. Standing in front of the McGuire statue are, from left: Rep. Robert Andrews (D-N.J.); Easterling; New Jersey Labor Commissioner Peter Calderone; Iris Rossell, McGuire's granddaughter; and Mary Crayton, AFL-CIO regional director. Easterling also participated in the New York City Labor Day Parade, along with Teamsters President Ron Carey (above), who served as the grand marshal.

Unions on march, on the move on Labor Day

Continued from Page 1

County AFL-CIO in Pleasanton, Calif., near Oakland.

"Are we going to be a smart-work, high-opportunity, high-wage country or a hard-work, low-wage country where the middle class is dividing?" Clinton asked. "I think I know what we have to do and I want you to stand with me because you know what we have to do. The very first thing we ought to do is to say we're going to do no harm. We're going to stop trying to undo the protections in the American law for working men and women."

Also on Labor Day, a dramatic new organizing drive was announced by the New York City Central Labor Council at its annual breakfast observance, where Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich was joined by AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling, Teamsters President Ron Carey, New York State AFL-CIO President Edward J. Cleary and numerous other labor dignitaries.

New York City AFL-CIO unions have put up nearly $250,000 as an initial investment, said Brian McLaughlin, president of the city central labor council. "There are hundreds of thousands of unorganized workers in New York City who deserve to be represented by a collective bargaining agreement," he said.

"We are here today to roll up our sleeves, go into the streets and launch a major organizing drive, the likes of which hasn't been seen since the early 1960s."

The city AFL-CIO will kick off the organizing drive in the retail food industry, and then move on to hotel and restaurant workers, garment and textile workers and department store employees, he said.

"We're here to celebrate real unions — not those pseudo-unions that the bosses patch together, but unions that belong to workers, improve their standard of living and defend their rights at work," Easterling told the breakfast. "We must work for a society where people care for each other, help each other, stand together, plan for the future, respect working people and take care of the less fortunate."

Easterling joined city labor officials in the nation's most heralded Labor Day parade, in which Carey served as the grand marshal.

Donahue, Sweeney appear together

In addition to the California picnic, broadcast nationally by C-SPAN, and "Meet the Press," Donahue and Sweeney also appeared together on National Public Radio and PBS's "MacNeil-Lehrer News Hour." Sweeney is challenging Donahue for the federation's presidency at the AFL-CIO convention next month.

During the PBS news show, Sweeney pointed to the merger of the Chemical and Chase banks, which will end the jobs of 12,000 people, noting that "each of those individual workers by themselves can't do a thing to protect their job. If they were organized and if they had collective bargaining, they'd have job security and they'd have a process where their needs could be addressed."

The strength of unionization was amplified in the Washington area, where non-union workers at Woodward and Lothrop's department stores were told they would lose their jobs as a result of the sale to May Department Stores.



Phot by Tom Johnson

In Decatur, Ill., Paperworker Dick Schable and his wife, Sandy, were joined by Martin Mangan, pastor of the St. James Parish, as they spent Labor Day chained to the gate at A.E. Staley, which has locked out the workers for more than two years. Workers, some of whom are fasting, said they will rotate duty chained to the fence in 12-hour shifts, the length of the shifts Staley is seeking to force on workers.

May had guaranteed the jobs of all union workers, represented by Food and Commercial Workers Local 400, which almost immediately signed up a majority of the 2,500 workers at May's Hecht's stores, under a card-check agreement worked out as part of the purchase.

Donahue and Sweeney met in California twice in 12 days, with the first appearance coming at a pre-Labor Day debate Aug. 24, during which the candidates laid out their platforms and took questions from union members.

"I decided to run for president of the AFL-CIO because I believe America's working families deserve a better deal from their country and from the labor movement, because organized labor is the only voice of American workers and their families and because the silence is deafening," Sweeney said.

"The only force in this nation which is potentially strong enough to turn back that tide of greed, the only force in this nation that is able to overcome the unholy alliance between the profiteering special interests and the politics of reaction is this labor movement," Donahue said in his opening statement. "The only effective answer to organized greed is organized labor."

Television and radio advertisements on the Stand UP campaign continued to run in 26 districts through the holiday weekend, while trade unionists worked to bring that message home to localities around the country.

During the course of the holiday weekend, Donahue also spoke at a Labor Day breakfast and festival sponsored by the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor and traveled to Detroit to carry a message of solidarity and support to striking newspaper workers. Easterling kicked off the weekend with a trip to the 101st Annual Peter J. McGuire Labor Day Observance put on by the Southern New Jersey Central Labor Council.

McGuire's efforts in the 19th century led to the creation of Labor Day.

After breakfast in New York, Reich traveled to Cheverly, Md., a suburb of Washington, for lunch with Fire Fighters and a chance to discuss the needs of American workers. At both functions, he expressed the Clinton administration's support for labor and policies to help American workers, such as an increase in the minimum wage to $5.15 per hour.

Cries for justice ring out

Across the nation, trade unionists marked the day in a variety of ways. Steelworkers protested at Bridgestone/Firestone corporate headquarters in Nashville, Tenn., Aug. 31, to call attention to the fact that former Rubber Workers have not been returned to their jobs after the longest strike in the history of the tire industry.

Nearly 4,000 members who went out on strike last year ended the action in May, but only a handful have been returned to the workplace, the USWA said. The company has hired 2,300 "permanent replacements."

In Decatur, Ill., where many rubber workers were still out of work since the strike was called off, and where UAW members are on strike against Caterpillar, a group of Paperworkers chained themselves to the gate at Staley Manufacturing, the corn-sweetener maker that locked out its union workers more than two years ago.

Several of the UPIU members continued a fast to protest the union-busting tactics of the company. Union members across the country joined in a Pepsi Action Weekend to urge Pepsico to stop buying the Staley product.

Several forums were held, including a Laborers-sponsored event Sept. 1 in Washington that also was broadcast on C-SPAN. LIUNA President Arthur Coia said the labor movement should focus more attention on training for workers, as LIUNA has, and on cooperative efforts with employers.

Steelworkers President George Becker asserted that "corporate America has never accepted the right of unions to exist," and he voiced opposition to the Republican-backed bill to change Section 8(a)(2) of the National Labor Relations Act that would mean that "organized labor will be dead."

A forum at Cornell University in New York Aug. 31 featured former USWA President Lynn R. Williams, who said the need for a voice for American workers is greater today than it has been since the industrial revolution.

"I think we established our relevance as a labor movement during the 1980s," he said. "The miracle is not that these have been difficult times in terms of organizing. The miracle is, that despite all those difficulties, there are workers who persisted."



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

Bricklayers President John T. Joyce swears in Robert A. Georgine and Paschal McGuinness as president and secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department.

BCTD lays foundation for 21st century

By Michael Byrne
Chicago

The building trades began a "Countdown to the 21st Century" with a series of forward-looking programs targeting services to members, organizing, legislative and political action and leadership training.

"We have it within our grasp to reorganize this industry," Building and Construction Trades Department President Robert A. Georgine told delegates to the 65th BCTD convention. "We know how to turn the increasing skill shortage to our advantage and we know how to expand our jurisdictional horizons beyond the gravitational force of this planet."

Georgine said he would appoint a committee to help him restructure the department "so that it is responsive to the pressures of today and tomorrow," and that he would expand the organizing committee to reflect rank and file, local and state councils and international staff.

BCTD's legislative lobbying efforts will be extended to every local building trades council, he said. "By having our members educated and mobilized around political and legislative issues, we will create an army of voters that will be more powerful than any political action committee."

To ensure future leadership in the trades, Georgine promised to expand training programs for local and state building trades council officers at the George Meany Center for Labor Studies.

Georgine was re-elected unanimously after Painters President A.L. "Mike" Monroe decided not to have his name placed in nomination.

The convention also elected Paschal McGuinness, first vice president of the Carpenters, to be secretary-treasurer, replacing Joseph F. Maloney, who had announced his retirement after serving since 1974. McGuinness, a native of Ireland, previously was president of both the New York City and New York state UBC councils.

The convention agreed to table until the year 2000 a resolution that would restrict executive officers of the department from holding any other full-time salaried position. Until then, Georgine will remain chairman of the Union Labor Life Insurance Co., which he described as the convention's "most contentious matter."

"We have five years to plan for that condition. We have time for decisions, time for transitions," said Georgine, who pointed out that he is not involved in the day-to-day operation of ULLICO, and that he only takes one salary. "Both organizations have done well," he said.

The convention took special note of the success of the department's Construction Organizing Membership Education Training (COMET) program, which Georgine said has become "the fueling foundations of our organizing campaigns."

AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue also had special praise for the COMET program, which was initiated by the Electrical Workers. "You are creating real membership support for organizing and involving thousands of your members in the process," he said.

COMET is important, Donahue said, because "the AFL-CIO itself can't do the critical, front-line organizing work. Every industry and every trade is different, as you know so well. Organizing is something each union must do for itself, from the ground up. That's how we built the labor movement, and that's how we'll rebuild it."

Donahue noted that the AFL-CIO has created an organizing fund that eventually would budget $20 million a year for multiunion organizing efforts that can target specific industries, much as COMET is doing.

But the AFL-CIO's best contribution, he said, is "to help create the climate in which organizing can succeed." He pointed to his nurturing of the federation's Housing Investment Trust and Building Investment Trust, which manage and invest $1.4 billion of pension money in unionized construction, and have created 40,000 union construction jobs.

Noting that the building trades had pioneered sound multiemployer pension plans, the delegates urged union pension funds to target investments to boost union labor construction projects, participating both in HIT/BIT projects and ULLICO's "J for Jobs" program.

Delegates also promised a spirited defense of the Davis-Bacon Act and state prevailing wage laws, and urged an increase in the minimum wage.

Court deals another blow to rail labor

By David Kameras

Transportation Communications Union members raised picket lines at more than 20 CSX/Sealand Terminals locations Aug. 30 in a strike to protest the replacement of union workers with a non-union subcontractor.

Within six hours, however, management secured a court restraining order to end the walkout.

TCU President Robert A. Scardelletti denounced CSX Terminals for abolishing all nine TCU-covered gate positions at the Jacksonville, Fla., facility and replacing them with workers from CSX Services, a non-union subsidiary of CSX. "Some of the laid-off workers were then rehired to do the same work at lower wages by non-union CSX Services," he said.

"We did not take this action lightly," Scardelletti said. "We have an agreement with CSX/Sealand Terminals to do the gate work, and we have performed that work since the company's creation in 1992."

The Jacksonville court's action followed by two days a preliminary injunction it issued against the Maintenance of Way Employees. BMWE members had walked out Aug. 17 at CSX Transportation, a move prompted by the use of supervisors to perform union work.

In both instances, management argued that workers' grievances concerned "minor disputes" as defined by the Railway Labor Act, making them subject to the arbitration process.

"We didn't even get a hearing the day of the strike," said Sue Creswell of the BMWE. "It looks like minds were already made up."

In other legal action, CSXT was ordered by a public law board to pay nearly $300,000 to 43 TCU members for taking almost four years to serve notices with regard to the elimination of train operator positions, as required by a 1986 national rail agreement.

Work had been assigned to United Transportation Union workers and non-union workers.

Meanwhile, transit unions have indicated their general support for proposed regulations governing job protections in their industry.

The Department of Labor is revising its guidelines for implementing Section 13(c) of the Federal Transit Act, which currently guarantees continued employment and collective bargaining rights when transit systems are acquired.

Support for the agency's move was voiced by the Amalgamated Transit Union, the Transport Workers and the AFL-CIO Transportation Trades Department.

However, ATU said it opposes as "totally unrealistic and unnecessary" certification time limits contained in the proposed rule change, as well as waivers for capital grants for routine equipment replacement.

The union also warned the DOL "to be on guard against suggestions or efforts that would in the name of operating efficiencies seek to use this process to reduce or weaken the substantial protections long guaranteed by the act's requirements."

Mobile phones boycott puts more heat on Bell Atlantic

By Colleen M. O'Neill

The AFL-CIO has added Bell Atlantic/NYNEX Mobile Systems to its national boycott list at the request of the Communications Workers and the Electrical Workers.

CWA is in the midst of a $5 million corporate campaign against Bell Atlantic, which includes contacting major investors, directors and stockholders, as well as public protests. The union has been asking union members in the Bell Atlantic service area to turn in cards canceling such optional services as call waiting and caller ID.

Bell Atlantic and NYNEX formed a partnership in July for mobile telephone services on the East Coast, and NYNEX used that partnership as justification for withdrawing recognition from a CWA technical unit in New York City and two IBEW-represented groups in New England.

The unions said in an Aug. 21 letter to AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue they would be filing National Labor Relations Board charges on the matter.

CWA's corporate campaign seeks a fair and equitable contract with Bell Atlantic, which remains the only one of seven regional Bell operating companies and AT&T to not reach a settlement with the union. CWA represents approximately 37,000 Bell Atlantic employees in Maryland, Virginia, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Delaware and Washington, D.C.

CWA's contract with Atlantic Bell expired Aug. 5.

The other contracts all include a wage package of 10 percent to 11 percent raises over three years, improvements in job security language and maintenance of retiree health benefits. But Bell Atlantic, the nation's second-largest telecommunications company with profits of $1.4 billion last year, has refused to follow the lead of the other companies.

"We're prepared for a sustained campaign," CWA spokesman Jeff Miller said. "The possibility of a strike is there and could happen."

CWA President Morton Bahr earlier had announced plans to enlist international labor solidarity in the fight through the Postal, Telephone and Telegraph international trade secretariat. The company has holdings in New Zealand, Mexico and the United Kingdom.

Also planned is a substantial media buy, including newspaper, radio and television ads in Washington, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, Charleston, W.Va., and Richmond, Va., along with USA Today, The Wall Street Journal and Roll Call.

"There's been very little progress made" thus far in negotiations over the past month, Miller said. But he said the union remained "determined that this company not establish the pattern for the next round of bargaining."

BARGAINING

UAW, Mitsubishi agree

Some 3,200 UAW members at Mitsubishi's Normal, Ill., assembly plant will receive increased wages, better retirement benefits and enhanced health care under a new three-year contract.

The agreement, ratified Aug. 31 by UAW Local 2488, calls for pay hikes of 24 cents to 26 cents in the first year to allow workers to catch up to their counterparts at Chrysler Corp. Future increases will be tied to the 1996 bargaining outcome at Chrysler. A 3 percent performance bonus in March 1996 also is included.

The agreement allows workers to make increased contributions to a 401(k) plan and increases the company's match by 10 percent.

A new health maintenance organization option was added to the health care plan, along with new vision benefits and free immunizations.

IAM ends Silgan strike

The Machinists ended a two-month strike at Silgan Containers Corp.'s Riverbank, Calif., plant after ratifying a new five-year agreement.

The pact raises wages 13.5 percent over the term and improves health benefits for 300 members of IAM Local 1528. Company pension contributions were increased as well.

The workers returned to work Aug. 28, displacing 200 replacement workers who had been hired soon after the strike began June 21.

"This was a successful strike for our members because not one member thought of crossing the picket line," said local official Vince P. Avana.

IBT strikes carhauler

Some 5,000 Teamsters walked out at Ryder Systems, the nation's largest carhauler, after several carhaul companies refused to provide information necessary for bargaining.

The Sept. 7 strike effectively shuts down about one-third of the nation's carhaul business. Before the strike, 60 percent of Ryder's business involved transporting new cars from GM factories to dealer showrooms.

Talks between the union and the nation's eight largest carhaulers began in January and broke off in June when they were unable to agree on such key issues as job security. After workers overwhelmingly rejected the companies' final offer, negotiations resumed in August, breaking off again Sept. 1.

The IBT's national contract with the carhaulers covers 12,000 truck drivers, dockworkers and mechanics.

Online employees covered

The Newspaper Guild and Philadelphia's two daily newspapers have agreed that most full-time employees of the Philadelphia Online, the papers' news service on the Internet, will be covered by the collective bargaining agreement.

The new addendum gives TNG a voice in the electronic venture while assuring the papers flexibility as they develop the new system. Philadelphia Online now has only four employees, but the agreement allows for growth, the union said.



Daymon J. Hartley/The Detroit Journal

AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue addresses rally for striking Detroit newspaper workers.

Unions show strength, solidarity

Continued from Page 1

leaders, including Service Employees President John J. Sweeney, who told the strikers, "We will not be moved by immoral and illegal acts. . . discouraged by blatant union-busting. . . split by devious and divisive management strategies. . . And we will not retreat in the face of corporate aggression. "

At the end of the rally, Mine Workers President Richard L. Trumka exhorted the crowd, saying, "We've talked enough. The time for action is here." The crowd then marched down to bolster ongoing pickets at the gate of the Sterling Heights printing plant where the papers jointly publish their scab product.

At the plant, the protestors for 12 hours blocked the gate where delivery trucks usually depart at 8 p.m., preventing the delivery until mid-afternoon the next day in several parts of the city. Earlier in the day, police sprayed some marchers with pepper gas.

The large police presence worsened an already tense situation, union leaders said. "They should not have brought in all those officers," said Al Derey, chairman of the Metropolitan Council of Newspapers, which represents the sriking unions. "The people were upset as it was. That only exacerbated things."

"We were delighted in our ability to shut down the plant. We're hoping that sends a message to the company that this will be more and more costly to them until we get contracts," said Lou Mleczko, president of The Newspaper Guild Local 22.

Other national union leaders who took part in the rally included Presidents Ron Carey of the Teamsters, James Norton of the Graphic Communications Union, Stephen P. Yokich of the UAW, Mac Fleming of the Maintenance of Way Employees and AFSCME Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson.

"I think that the workers there are properly demonstrating the fury that they feel at the efforts of the Detroit News and the Free Press to bust their union. And that's what the strike is about," Donahue said later during an interview on CNN.

Donahue's statement was borne out by earlier comments of News publisher Robert H. Giles, who told the St. Petersburg Times Aug. 27 that the strike must eventually end in one of two ways: "We're going to hire a whole new work force and go on without unions, or they can surrender unconditionally and salvage what they can," he said.

Detroit Guild leaders said the latest proposal from the Free Press wasn't worth sending to its membership for consideration. The offer included a slightly better base wage rate, but eliminated overtime for certain journalists and required higher insurance co-payments for some workers. But the paper insisted the Guild accept the deal by Sept. 5, the day set for talks between the paper and the union.

The offer was a part of the papers' unsuccessful strategy to "pick unions off one by one," said Shavonne Perpena, one of four AFL-CIO organizers sent by the federation's Strategic Approaches Committee to help the strikers.

The AFL-CIO Community Service Department has started an adopt-a-striking-family program called the DNA Striker Relief Fund. The fund will be administered by the Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO. A brochure describing the program initially will be sent to state federations and large central local bodies in Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin.

Donations should be made payable and sent to DNA Striker Relief Fund, Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO, 2550 West Grand Blvd., Detroit, Mich. 48208.

The unions also received international support from the Polish trade union, Solidarnosc. Responding to a Detroit News scab editorial that invoked the union's name, Solidarnosc President Marian Krzaklewski admonished the paper for turning the union's history upside down "as part of an anti-union propaganda campaign."

"Instead of permanently replacing workers, robbing them of their jobs and their futures, which can only make negotiations more difficult, we urge you to bargain in good faith," Krzaklewski wrote. "Strong, free trade unions, collective bargaining and freedom of association are the essence of democracy and are the friends, not the enemies, of free speech and the free press."

Few jobs added as economic recovery continues stall

By David Kameras

The economic recovery continues to be anemic, with manufacturing and construction seeing little in the way of benefits.

The unemployment rate in August dropped a tiny 0.1 percent to 5.6 percent, continuing a pattern of nominal changes over the past several months. However, manufacturing rose a slim 12,000 jobs after a huge drop in July and smaller losses in the preceding three months, for a net loss of 175,000 jobs since March.

Construction also was flat in August, with only 28,000 jobs added since the first of the year.

"The job picture is mushy, with lots of weaknesses to temper the reported total job growth of 250,000," said Rudy Oswald, AFL-CIO chief economist.

Continued corporate downsizing and cost-cutting have contributed to the lackluster jobs picture. Kellogg Co. will lay off more than 1,000 workers by early next year, including at least 800 at its main Battle Creek, Mich., plant, with an additional 15 percent cut forecast, and nearly 300 more in Memphis, Tenn.

"We were completely shocked by this," said David Green, president of Grain Millers Local 3. "We were in the middle of negotiations about having about 150 people retire early when we got hit out of the clear blue with this."

Severance negotiations are slated for Sept. 13-17. The move follows announced plans by the company to close a plant in San Leandro, Calif., by the end of the year, putting 325 more workers out on the street.

Maytag closed a vending-machine plant in West Virginia when it moved operations to a lower-wage facility in South Carolina, affecting the lives of 800.

Wall Street rejoiced when Chase Manhattan Bank and Chemical Bank announced they would merge to form the nation's largest bank. But the move will close hundreds of branches and result in layoffs for 12,000.

Faced with a revenue crunch, Los Angeles County, Calif., plans to lay off 5,000 Department of Health Services employees and demote 10,000 more.

Many of the new jobs being created don't pay the bills. In a new study of job growth from 1983 to 1993, Neal H. Rosenthal of the Bureau of Labor Statistics found that "from an industry viewpoint, employment growth is concentrated in low-paying industries."

And many who work don't get a full week's pay. In its first-ever study of workers in contingent jobs, the Bureau of Labor Statistics found that from 2.7 million to more than 6 million Americans are employed in jobs "structured to last only a limited period of time" — and most of them want permanent employment.

Using the higher figure, which includes those who have held their jobs for at least a year and expect another year of employment, 55.8 percent of surveyed contingent workers said they would prefer non-contingent employment.

Of the 6 million, 54 percent are employed in services, followed by wholesale and retail trade (13.4 percent), construction (11.8 percent) and manufacturing (9.5 percent).

When grouped together, independent contractors, workers provided by contract companies, day laborers, temps and on-call workers — those involved in "alternative work arrangements" in contrast to the standard 40-hour week — surpass 12 million.

At the same time, programs to help the working poor are under attack by Republicans in Congress. "The groups at other income levels have a lot more political clout," said Robert Greenstein, director of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. "So the cuts are much deeper for those who are poor — those who work and those who don't."

AFT launches two-pronged drive for schools

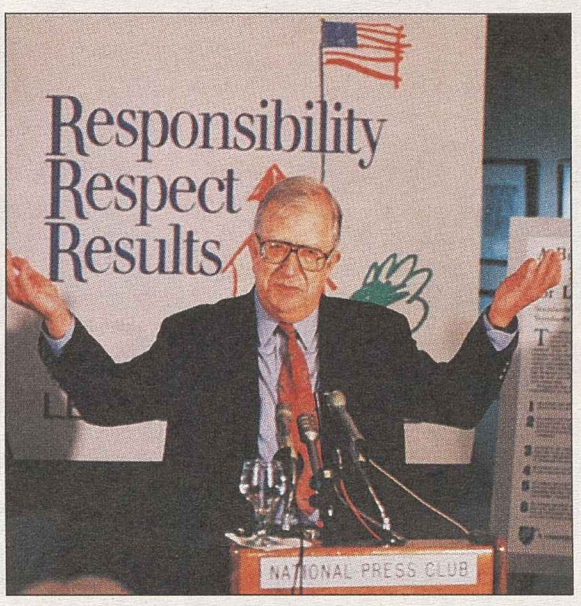
By James B. Parks

The AFT and several allies launched two national grass-roots campaigns — one emphasizing school discipline and higher academic standards, and another fighting attempts to eviscerate the education budget.

"We need to focus our schools on the two essential conditions for learning: standards of conduct and standards for achievement," AFT President Albert Shanker told a Sept. 6 Washington news conference. "Other education reforms may work. High standards for conduct and achievement do work — and nothing else can work without them."

The first campaign, "Responsibility, Respect, Results: Lessons for Life," will involve AFT members in more than 50 state and local affiliates across the country. The core of the campaign is a "Bill of Rights and Responsibilities for Learning" that outlines the conditions for student success, including:

- Safe, orderly and drug-free schools.
- Discipline codes with clear consequences and consistent, fair enforcement.
- Alternative educational placements for violent and disruptive students.
- Clear, rigorous academic standards and grades that stand for high achievement, not social promotion.
- High school diplomas that certify students as ready for work or college.



AFT President Albert Shanker

- Support from parents, public officials, business and the community in upholding high standards of conduct and achievement.

"Parents and the public are with us on this," Shanker said. "They don't trust faddish reforms, like vouchers and private management, and they believe that it's time to concentrate on discipline, order and high standards.

"They're right, and we think they should get what they are asking for. The evidence shows that this works," he said.

The AFT bill of rights "outlines how good schools should work. All of these elements make common sense, educational sense and practical sense," Shanker said.

Joining the AFT in its "Lessons for Life" campaign are the National Alliance of Business, Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Committee for Economic Development, Farm Workers and several state legislators.

The union also is trying to repel the ongoing attack on the nation's schools with a grass-roots effort to persuade Congress to keep funding education.

Through the Education First Alliance, the AFT has targeted 50 congressional districts represented by moderate Republicans for a series of activities, culminating in a lobbying day Sept. 19.

The activities are designed to convince the Republicans to vote to change the Labor/HHS appropriations bill passed by the House, which cuts education funding by 33 percent in the first year.

It is not too late to reverse the cuts, the AFT said. The Senate has yet to vote on the bill and President Clinton also has vowed to veto the House version.

UNION NEWS

Jaworski hotel boycotted

The AFL-CIO has added the Stadium Holiday Inn in Philadelphia to its boycott list at the request of the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees.

In 1993, Stadium Hotel Partners purchased the hotel and fired all union workers, members of HERE Local 274. Non-union workers were hired with lower wages and no benefits. Ron Jaworski, former quarterback for the Philadelphia Eagles, is one of the hotel's investors.

Jaworski also is soliciting business at seven golf courses he owns and manages in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware as part of Ron Jaworski Links, Inc. They include Ingleside Country Club in Thorndale, Pa.; Honey Run Golf and Country Club and Yorktowne Golf and Country Club in York, Pa.; Eagles Nest Country Club in Sewell, N.J.; Stony Brook Country Club in Hopewell, N.J.; Wild Oaks Country Club in Salem, N.J.; and Garrison's Lake Country Club in Smyrna, Del.

Thais sue employers

Sixty-two Thai immigrants who had been enslaved in an El Monte, Calif., garment factory for up to seven years are suing their former employers.

In a suit filed Sept. 5, the workers charged garment contractors SK Fashions, S&P Fashions, D&R Fashions and the individual owners associated with these companies with involuntary servitude, false imprisonment, racketeering, fraud, assault and civil rights and labor law violations.

El Monte is a suburb of Los Angeles where a multiagency law enforcement task force last month raided an apartment complex used as a garment factory where Thai immigrant workers were held against their will. Workers were recruited in Thailand, then brought to the United States, where they worked up to 22 hours a day and slept on mats on the factory floor.

The task force learned about the illegal factory from a worker who had escaped. The lawsuit was filed in U.S. District Court for the Central District of California by the Asian Pacific American Legal Center, UNITE and Rothner, Segall and Greenstone, a Pasadena, Calif.-based law firm.

CIO exhibit to open

The New Jersey Historical Commission has awarded a $3,000 grant to the American Labor Museum/Botto House National Landmark to develop an exhibit commemorating the 60th anniversary of the Congress of Industrial Organizations.

The exhibit, titled "The Birth and Formative Years of the CIO in New Jersey" and covering the years 1935-1961, will be displayed at Rutgers University Labor Education Center in New Brunswick, N.J., from Sept. 14 to Sept. 30. On Oct. 14, the exhibit will open at the American Labor Museum/Botto House National Landmark and remain on display through December.



UFCW photo

UFCW President Doug Dority joins youngsters from the Eagle Ridge Institute, an Oklahoma City-based organization that helps at-risk youth, as they helped serve breakfast at a homeless shelter. The union sponsored the group's week-long visit to the Washington area, where they stayed at the George Meany center.

NEWSMAKERS

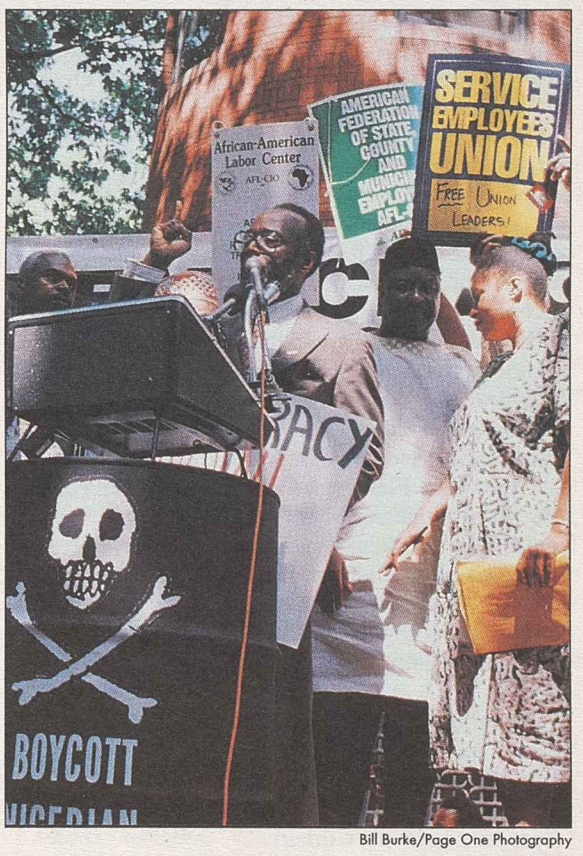
Labor leaders led a protest at the Nigerian embassy against the suppression of human rights by that country's military rulers. Among the participants were AFL-CIO Vice President **Gloria Johnson**, president of the Coalition of Labor Union Women; AFSCME Secretary-Treasurer **William Lucy**, president of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists; and Food and Commercial Workers Vice President **Willie Baker**. **Joslyn Williams**, president of the Washington Metropolitan AFL-CIO, was arrested along with **Juliet Lenoir** of the African American Labor center, TransAfrica President **Randall Robinson** and NAACP Washington Bureau Director **Wade Henderson** for blocking the embassy entrance. The rally was sponsored by the AFL-CIO, CBTU and TransAfrica.

John Goglia, a member of the Machinists, has been confirmed by the U.S. Senate for a seat on the National Transportation Safety Board. He is the first working airframe and power plant mechanic to serve on the safety board.

Robert Pleasure, executive director of the George Meany Center for Labor Studies, has named **Louise D. Walsh** chair of the center's faculty.

AWARDS

Union Privilege has awarded 114 students represented by 38 unions more than $150,000 in Union MasterCard Scholarships. Union Privilege has awarded more than $487,000 in scholarships in the past four years.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Joslyn Williams, president of the Washington Metropolitan AFL-CIO, addresses a rally outside the Nigerian embassy Aug. 30 to protest the suppression of human rights by Nigeria's military rulers

'Workers need a raise on this Labor Day'

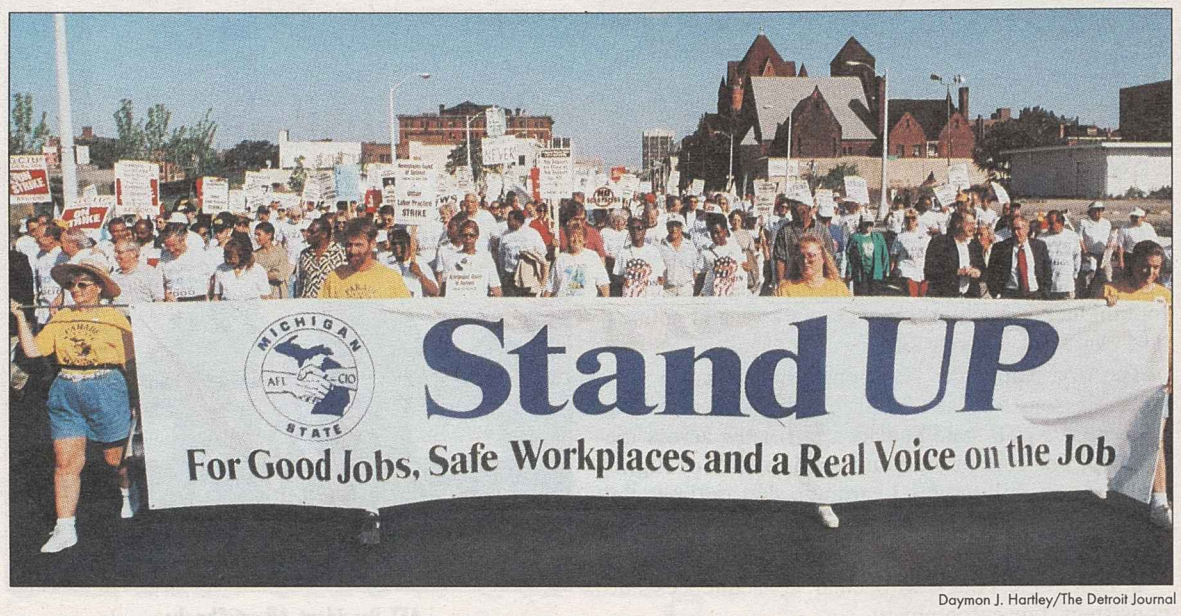
By David Kameras

With profits soaring and productivity rising, but with earnings barely keeping pace with inflation, the state of the world for workers is a very insecure and difficult one, AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue told reporters during a Labor Day roundtable interview.

"Clearly, America needs a raise on Labor Day," Donahue said. "There ought to be some sharing of those profits with the people who create them."

For many working families, the American dream has become an American nightmare, said Service Employees President John J. Sweeney, a candidate for the AFL-CIO presidency who appeared with Donahue Aug. 24 at a California AFL-CIO conference.

"In our country, the stock market is booming and businesses are flush with cash," Sweeney said. "But America's working families are flush only with unpaid bills. The children of the rich and powerful in our country look forward to a future filled with more, while the children of American workers look to a future filled with less."



Daymon J. Hartley/The Detroit Journal

The Stand UP campaign, spotlighted at the Detroit Labor Day parade, is a call for social and economic justice.

A new report by the Economic Policy Institute adds credence to labor's view that significant income growth has been largely limited to the very highest wage-earners and the wealthy.

"Growing inequality has created a wedge between economic growth and rising living standards, leaving the vast majority of American families no better off in 1995 than in 1989, the last cyclical peak," observed economists Dean Baker and Lawrence Mishel.

"In the 1990s, overall wage growth has been dampened by a redistribution of income from labor to owners of capital as profitability, the economic return on capital (or assets), has reached historically high levels," they said.

Further, "the growth of wage inequality that began in the 1980s and persisted throughout the 1990s has prevented middle- and low-wage earners from achieving higher wages and has forced them to accept reductions in their real wages, as earnings failed to keep up with inflation."

Bruce S. Raynor, UNITE's executive vice president and director of the needle trade union's efforts to organize low-wage workers in the South, sees this process as a cynical undermining of American family values.

"In the final analysis, what we're left with are greedy executives and government officials supplementing their lifestyles and incomes on the backs of the working poor, forcing mothers to hold down two or more jobs to make ends meet, or worse, throwing entire communities into an abyss of poverty," Raynor said.

"The United States now has the worst maldistribution of wealth in the world," Donahue pointed out. "In this country, one-half of 1 percent (0.5 percent) of the people now hold one-third of the total national wealth. And the tax laws will give that one-half of 1 percent an additional transfer of $170 billion every year until we succeed in changing those laws."

"The earnings of most American workers are either stuck in the mud or sinking," added Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich in an address to the Center for National Policy. "Profits are up. Paychecks are not.

"Closing the gap between paychecks and profits is our great remaining challenge," Reich said. "The steady decline in the median wage and the widening gulf between the rich and the rest threaten the stability and prosperity of this nation.

"I am not referring to some unfortunate sliver of the population," he said. "I am talking about most workers."

The authors of EPI's "Profits Up, Wages Down: Worker Losses Yield Big Gains for Business" said a persistent growth in wage inequality has offset the benefits of economic growth in the past six years. Some 80 percent of families had less income in 1993 than in 1989.

"Given the poor wage performance over the 1993-95 period, it is likely that middle- and lower-income families have not made any significant income progress over the last two years, and middle-class family incomes in 1995 will still be below their 1989 levels," they said. "The 1991-95 recovery could thus be the first recovery where middle-class incomes did not surpass the level attained at the end of the prior recovery."

Meanwhile, non-farm business had after-tax profits of 7.5 percent in 1994, double that of the 3.8 percent average scored between 1952 and 1979. Yet investment as a share of output has reached historically low levels, according to EPI.

Profit rates in the 1990s went up "because firms were able to reduce their costs, essentially labor costs, and achieve their trend growth in productivity," EPI said. "The ability of firms to restructure costs so as to obtain historically high profitability reflects the dominant power of employers . . . in the shaping of wages and working conditions in today's labor market.

"The challenge facing policy-makers is not only to maintain or improve current productivity growth but to ensure that future increases in efficiency translate into gains for the vast majority," the study concluded.

New elections ordered at Fieldcrest

'Egregious and pervasive' anti-union activity cited

The National Labor Relations Board imposed a broad array of remedies on Fieldcrest Cannon Inc. for its "numerous, pervasive and outrageous" actions during a 1991 Clothing and Textile Workers election in Western North Carolina.

The board ordered a new election but at a neutral site, not on Fieldcrest's premises. The company's past examples of "objectionable conduct are so egregious and pervasive, the reasons favoring conducting a second election on the respondent's (Fieldcrest Cannon's) premises have been substantially undermined," the board said.

The decision affirmed the 1994 decision of an administrative law judge. Management has promised to appeal the decision, which stemmed also from violations at Fieldcrest facilities in Alabama, Georgia, Virginia and elsewhere in North Carolina.

"Every time Fieldcrest Cannon appeals this case, a new set of judges or board members finds a stronger punishment for them," said Bruce Raynor, executive vice president and southern regional director of UNITE, the successor to ACTWU. "Eventually, the company is going to have to face the fact its horrible treatment of employees disgusts everyone who learns about it."

The union had complained of threats and reprisals against union activists, interrogation of employees about their union sympathies, threats about the consequences of unionization and preferential treatment of pro-management workers.

Two weeks before the election, Ozzie Raines, vice president for human resources, warned in a videotaped speech that a union victory would mean bargaining would begin with a "clean sheet of paper" and all benefits could be lost. Other supervisors said talks would "begin from scratch."

A public relations firm posted ads on telephone poles and within factory gates likening a union victory to a nuclear explosion and hinting at possible plant closure. The ads, purportedly representing "Citizens Concerned for Cabarrus and Rowan Counties," were in fact bankrolled by Fieldcrest Cannon.

After the election, which the ACTWU lost 3,443 to 3,053, the company gave a 5.5 percent pay raise to its unorganized workers alone, breaking from its earlier practice of granting identical wages to union and non-union workers alike.

UNITE characterized the NLRB's decision as fashioning "some of the most powerful and far-reaching remedies in recent labor law history." The NLRB also ordered Fieldcrest Cannon to:

- Pay roughly $2 million in back wages to workers at unionized facilities.
- Reinstate 14 fired union supporters and give them up to $500,000 in back pay.
- Direct Raines to read, or be present for the reading of, a 45-point cease-and-desist notice to union and non-union workers.
- Publish the notice twice a week for four weeks in local newspapers, and mail copies of the notice to all employees.

Besides the neutral site, the board also ordered other election remedies: giving the union access to non-union facilities to discuss unionization with employees; granting the union equal time to respond to any statements management makes about unionization; and awarding the union the right to deliver a 30- minute speech to workers up to 48 hours prior to the vote.

"It's time to put the back-pay money in the workers' hands where it belongs, and it's time for Fieldcrest to obey the law," Raynor said.

— David Kameras

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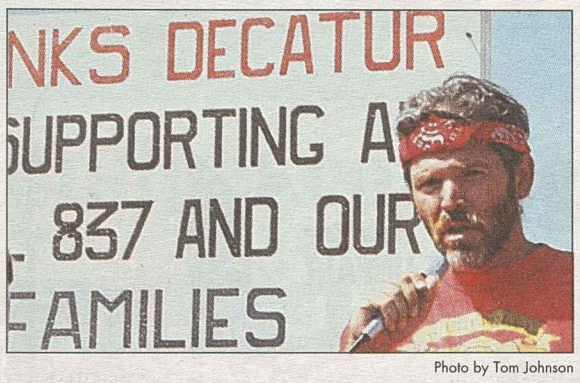


Photo by Tom Johnson

Staley worker Dan Lane is on a hunger strike to force a fair contract. **See story, Page 9.**

AFL-CIO NEWS

VOLUME 40, NUMBER 20 SEPTEMBER 25, 1995

$100 million organizing plan launched

By Michael Byrne

The Executive Council formally approved budget levels for an organizing fund that AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue predicted could produce as much as $100 million in annual organizing activity by affiliated unions by 1999.

The fund will be set at $5 million for next year, $10 million in 1997, $15 million in 1998 and $20 million in 1999. Donahue said he expected the investment in organizing by the federation would leverage another $80 million from affiliates by 1999, producing the $100 million additional revenue devoted to organizing.

The council authorized Donahue to pursue renegotiation of the Union Privilege MasterCard program with the organizing fund to get first priority call on money realized from those talks. The ad hoc committee on organizing was given the task of exploring how the fund would be administered and how organizing targets would be selected. The committee, chaired by President James Norton of the Graphic Communications Union, will prepare recommendations for the AFL-CIO convention Oct. 23-26.

More workers sign up

See story, Page 5

The council also reviewed a report by the ad hoc committee on governance, which is working on a proposal to substantially increase the representation of women and people of color on the council, and received a draft ethical practices code that will be considered at the convention.

The council also heard from House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.) and Senate Minority Leader Thomas A. Daschle (D-S.D.), and reviewed the federation's stepped-up legislative and political efforts, including the first stages of a program to train 500 grass-roots activists.

In addition to the ongoing Stand UP campaign to fend off congressional attacks on working families, the

Continued on Page 5

Labor, seniors expose GOP Medicare ruse

Rallies and ads urge Congress to spare cuts

By Colleen M. O'Neill

Seniors and their trade union allies are staring down Republican-led efforts to change the face of Medicare.

From rallies around the country to protests in Washington, television ad campaigns and congressional phone calls, unionists are mounting tremendous opposition to the GOP plan to cut $270 billion from the program to help pay for a tax break for the wealthy.

Medicare supporters from the Save Our Security group gathered several hundred strong in Boston's Faneuil Hall Sept. 18 to let lawmakers know how important the program is to them.

"Medicare and Medicaid are vital parts of our Social Security system," said Arthur Flemming, former Health, Education and Welfare secretary and chair of the Boston gathering. "When you cut the health care components, you undermine retirement security for millions while severing a lifeline for the disabled and the poor."

"We're taking the shaft," said 85-year-old Mary Enos of New Bedford, Mass. "They're giving to the greedy, not the needy."

Save Our Security, supported by the AFL-CIO and a number of labor and seniors' groups, held similar hearings in July and August in Los Angeles, Seattle, Chicago and Detroit, with gatherings planned in Miami and Washington in October.

The National Council of Senior Citizens is holding its own town meetings and Medicare "birthday parties" to mobilize opposition to proposed cuts. Such events already have been held in Chicago; New York; Philadelphia; Los Angeles; Cleveland; Seattle; Detroit; Miami; Washington; Waterloo, Iowa; Cumberland, R.I.; and Lewiston, Mont. NCSC also is distributing an 800 number for phone calls to members of Congress and is mailing periodic pieces to its activists.

The AFL-CIO is running TV ads featuring members of the Communications Workers and the Food and Commercial Workers who say that the Republican cuts are "just wrong," and urge proponents to "get

Continued on Page 3



Daymon J. Hartley/The Detroit Journal

Striking newspaper workers and their supporters rally outside the Sterling Heights, Mich., printing plant.

Detroit community sides with strikers

By James B. Parks

The Detroit newspaper strike has been boosted by a tremendous outpouring of solidarity and support from the community in that union town, particularly from the UAW and religious leaders, the Executive Council was told.

As a result of community pressure, the Sterling Heights City Council voted to stop accepting money from the Detroit Newspaper Agency, the joint operating agreement agent that had "donated" more than $300,000 to keep the cordons of police at the suburban printing plant. The city manager, a big booster of the newspapers, owned by Gannett and Knight-Ridder, also announced his resignation.

The strikers have been assisted by weekly outpourings of union members on picket lines, particularly from the UAW.

In another victory for the strikers, the two newspapers have been forced to publish separate editions, apparently in response to a Justice Department investigation into possible antitrust violations by the newspapers, which was initiated by the AFL-CIO.

In a report to the council, the AFL-CIO Strategic Approaches Committee cited the work of religious leaders from many faiths who have taken the lead in denouncing the tactics of newspaper management.

Detroit Cardinal Adam Maida has spoken out in the local media against the use of "permanent replacements" by the newspapers, and 80 Catholic priests joined in a statement that appeared as an ad in suburban Detroit papers saying permanent replacements are wrong, the committee reported.

Some 150 interfaith clergy signed a letter and presented it to executives of the Free Press and News, and key black clergy issued a statement against permanent replacements that ran as an ad in the state's largest African-American newspaper.

"The religious community opposes striker replacements and they don't believe in violence, so they're with us," said Shavonne Perpena, one of the AFL-CIO staff sent to Detroit by AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue to assist the strikers.

One of the key religious leaders who has joined the demonstrators is Bishop Thomas Gumbleton of the Detroit Catholic Archdiocese, who called the newspapers "immoral" for trying to bust unions by hiring replacement workers. He said the Detroit religious community is united in its support of the strikers and "that unity crosses all denominations."

Continued on Page 12

Rights 'central' to excellence, Donahue says

The task force studying labor-management cooperation in state and local government should recommend that every state extend full collective bargaining rights to all its public employees, AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue testified.

If the commission is seeking excellence in public service, Donahue said, full democratic rights on the job are fundamental.

"I believe this recommendation is central to everything else you'll do on its own merits," Donahue said. "I also believe that without it many labor-management experiments in states without collective bargaining will fail — as private-sector experience shows — and will poison the well for future innovations."

Currently, 26 states have no bargaining law or laws covering only some public employees, denying bargaining rights to 5.4 million workers, or one-third of all state and local employees. This situation is a "disgrace," Donahue told the Secretary of Labor's Task Force on Excellence in State and Local Government through Labor-Management Cooperation.

The key to achieving excellence in delivering public services, Donahue said, "is to harness the knowledge and expertise of the front-line workers. And that process is far more likely to succeed and to be sustained where the workers have an independent representative of their own."

Donahue cited an AFL-CIO report called "A Call to Partnership," which advocates labor-management partnerships based on mutual recognition and respect. Through these partnerships, labor and management have "succeeded in creating new work systems which alter in the most basic ways the manner in which work is organized, businesses are managed, and labor and management treat each other," he said.

Because management in both the public and private sectors likely will resist this fundamental change, "we conclude that it is incumbent upon unions to take the initiative in stimulating, sustaining and institutionalizing a new system of work organization based upon full and equal labor-management partnerships," Donahue said.

Robert J. Pleasure of the George Meany Center for Labor Studies testified on a public-sector pilot program for union field staff on labor-management cooperation, continuous bargaining structures and the management of change.

The pilot project is in cooperation with AFSCME Local 11/Ohio Civil Service Employees Association.



HERE photo

Some 5,000 unionists and supporters rallied in support of the Frontier strikers in a June march in Las Vegas.

Court boosts Frontier workers

By Muriel H. Cooper

Agreeing that the Frontier Hotel and Casino has engaged in unfair labor practices, an appeals court said the Las Vegas hotel must re-establish the employee pension plan and pay more than five years' worth of back contributions to past and current employees.

By stipulating that Frontier broke the law when it stopped contributing to the pension plan, imposed work rules and spied on union members, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals tacitly agreed that the workers, members of Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Local 226, could not be "permanently replaced," as the Frontier owners said they had done.

"This is the greatest present the workers could have received," said Jim Arnold, secretary-treasurer of Local 226, on the eve of the four-year anniversary of the strike by almost 550 workers represented by HERE, Teamsters and Operating Engineers.

Under the ruling, Frontier would have to pay millions of dollars toward the pension fund. The work rules violation may involve hundreds of former Frontier employees and could cost as much as $60 million.

"The decision is a tremendous step forward for the Frontier workers," who still walk a daily picket line and attend regular rallies, Arnold said. "Their pensions — a vital part of the employment compensation package — will be restored.

"Unfair and illegal work rules will be rescinded and the employees victimized by them will be made whole. Good-faith bargaining has been ordered," he said.

The decision comes on the heels of the National Labor Relations Board ruling that the hotel reimburse the Teamsters and the Operating Engineers for negotiation and litigation expenses.

The NLRB ruling, endorsed by Chairman William B. Gould and members Margaret A. Browning and John C. Truesdale, included a requirement that the hotel pick up the cost of the NLRB general counsel's litigation as well. The board ruled that the workers were forced to undergo a futile round of negotiations, which "caused the unions to waste their resources in a futile effort to bargain for an agreement that the employer never intended to reach."

While celebrating the legal victories and planning a rally to commemorate their fourth year on strike, the union made it clear that the door is still open for negotiations with the hotel.

"The olive branch is there if the Elardis (hotel owners) want to put this to bed and give the workers the justice they deserve," Arnold said.

"Even though we have been out here for four years, we will not go back to work with chips on our shoulders," said Lee Davis, a striking Frontier worker. "When we go back in, it will be to work harder than ever to make the hotel a success."

AFL-CIO seeks curtailment of work-based immigration

The AFL-CIO supports a draft proposal to cut employment-based immigrant admissions from 140,000 to 75,000, but opposes most of the other so-called reforms in the bill.

Employers now can claim a shortage of workers with necessary skills to justify admitting an alien with those skills. "Most labor shortage claims — including claims of shortages of highly skilled workers — do not stand up to careful scrutiny and analysis," Rudy Oswald, the AFL-CIO's chief economist, told the Senate Judiciary subcommittee on immigration.

"Employers seeking work-based admission of alien workers should be required to prove extensive recruiting efforts and . . . serious education and training efforts," he said.

Subcommittee Chair Alan Simpson (R-Wyo.) plans soon to introduce the Immigration Reform Act of 1995. A draft of the bill calls for an overall cap on legal immigrations of 375,000 a year, in contrast to the 675,000 immigrants who will be admitted next year.

Outside of the reduction in work-based admissions, the AFL-CIO found little to support, Oswald said.

Specifically, the federation opposes proposals to exempt aliens with "extraordinary ability, certain multinational executives and managers and investors of $1 million or more."

Oswald also expressed concern that the classifications for immediate relatives and family-sponsored immigrants could change. Further, the unions oppose allowing the Justice Department, instead of the National Labor Relations Board, to decide if a worker is being deported as a result of an unfair labor practice by the employer.

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Director of Information: Rex Hardesty

Editor: Michael Byrne

Assistant Editors: David Kameras, Colleen M. O'Neill, James B. Parks

Staff Writers: Muriel H. Cooper, Mike Hall, Sharolyn A. Rosier

Graphics/Layout: Stan Hitt, Hindi M. Fracasse

AFL-CIO Press Secretary: Candice Johnson

AFL-CIO Headquarters: 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006
Telephone: (202) 637-5010 • CompuServe: 71112,53 • Internet: http://www.aflcio.org

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION
OF
THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE AFL-CIO
LEADING THE FIGHT FOR AMERICA'S WORKING FAMILIES

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Budget cutting on two tracks

By Mike Hall

Although workers won a round in the battle to save funds for workplace safety and labor law enforcements, the budget war is far from over as Republicans continue their assault on programs that help working families.

The Senate Appropriations Committee approved its version of the 1996 Labor/HHS appropriations bill, which restored funds the House had slashed for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the Mine Safety and Health Administration, the National Labor Relations Board and some education programs. The committee also deleted most of the provisions restricting OSHA and NLRB powers.

Still, working families could lose a lot when House Republicans try to regain some of the deleted cuts in conference. The parallel budget reconciliation process also threatens to weaken pension laws, cut Medicare funding and viscerate such other programs as the earned income tax credit.

Reconciliation is designed to make sure that all changes in taxes and entitlement spending meet the goals set out in the budget resolution passed earlier.

On the appropriations bill, moderate Republicans led by Sen. Arlen Specter (R-Pa.) worked with Democrats and were able to restore about $4 billion, including $40 million for OSHA enforcement, $52.8 million for the NLRB, about $15 million for MSHA and $37.8 million for occupational safety and health research.

The bill also would provide some $300 million for the Goals 2000 program, which the House bill abolished, and about $460 million more for various other education programs not contained in the House bill.

Though the funding levels were higher than the House-passed version, they still reflect major funding reductions in important labor and education programs and fall short of the Clinton administration's request.

Also like the House bill, the Senate version includes a provision that would overturn President Clinton's executive order barring the federal government from doing business with firms that use permanent replacement workers. That is expected to be the subject of a floor fight and possible filibuster when the full Senate considers the bill later this month. Clinton has promised to veto the bill over that provision, among others.

When the bill gets to the floor, amendments to again slash funding and add the House legislative riders are expected. The Senate bill removed House provisions restricting safety and other agencies from specific actions, most of which big business had lobbied. Those included:

- Banning OSHA from developing or implementing protection against repetitive-stress injuries.
- Disallowing the NLRB from going to court to persuade a judge that an employer should stop an unfair labor practice — like firing union supporters — during an organizing drive.
- Preventing the Department of Labor from enforcing a Hazardous Occupation Order that prevents children from working with paper balers.
- Forbidding OSHA from enforcing a recent standard to protect against falls at a range of heights, even though falls cause most construction-site deaths.

The GOP reconciliation plan would give companies an even easier path to raiding workers' pension funds, as well as restricting the tax credit for low-income working families. The House Ways and Means Committee had both proposals under consideration.

"The 'savings' from both of these provisions are designed to pay for tax breaks for wealthy Americans at the expense of low- and middle-income workers and their families," AFL-CIO Legislative Director Peggy Taylor said.

The pension proposal would make it easier for corporations to use so-called "excess" pension funds for almost any purpose. Today those funds may only be used for retiree health programs without penalty, and firms pay a substantial 25 percent if they are used for any other purposes.

The proposal would reduce that penalty to just 6.5 percent, lower than the current prime interest rate. It would be an incentive to use these funds. Plans would be terminated and/or revised, leaving workers and retirees with no or reduced pension benefits. The current law restricting use of such funds was developed to protect against such action.

Coalitions seek full hearings on Medicare cuts

Continued from Page 1

informed . . . get involved . . . and Stand UP for what's right."

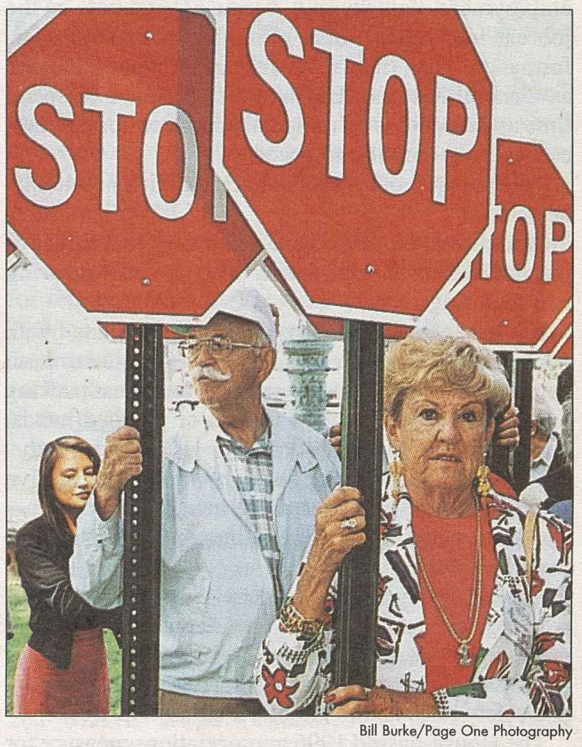
Those ads aired on CNN and five Washington television stations Sept. 16-24, and are part of the nearly $3 million paid media campaign the federation has mounted this year as part of its Stand UP for America's Working Families campaign to focus attention on the need for good jobs, good wages, health and safety and a real voice on the job.

The Save America's Families Coalition — whose members include the AFL-CIO, AFSCME, Citizen Action, Machinists, Mine Workers, NCSC, Operating Engineers, Service Employees, Teamsters and UAW — also has ads running. The group launched a $2 million media campaign and grass-roots effort Sept. 11 spotlighting 29 congressional districts in 19 states, and includes radio, TV and newspaper ads.

The perceived "crisis" in Medicare stems from the projected insolvency of the program's Part A trust fund in 2002. The Republican budget resolution seeks $270 billion in cuts and includes higher out-of-pocket costs for beneficiaries to pay increased premiums. Those costs would be hard for many seniors, who on average already are spending 21 percent of their income on health care.

In addition, the Republican proposal on Medicare seeks to hold the program to an unrealistic 4.9 percent annual growth rate, while health care spending overall is projected to grow at about 7.1 percent.

The Clinton administration already had provided for Medicare in its balanced budget proposal, which would have extended the trust fund's solvency through 2006 while also providing $124 billion in savings. Eighty percent of those savings would have come from health care providers.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Members of the Save Our Security coalition rally on Capitol Hill to stop GOP Medicare cuts.

Advocates also gathered in Washington Sept. 19 to stop the "sneak attack" on Medicare and Medicaid.

"America's seniors do not want to see these plans rammed through Congress without a real debate," said Ron Pollack of Families USA. "We want to know the details — what this will mean for real people who rely on Medicare for their health needs."

The Republicans scheduled one day of hearings — Sept. 22 — and then said they intended to mark up legislation beginning the week of Sept. 25. Labor and its allies have been pushing for at least four weeks of hearings on the proposals.

Flemming said more than 700,000 cards already have been sent to President Clinton urging him to veto the plan, should it reach his desk.

CAPITOL DIGEST

The AFL-CIO is actively opposing a jobs-threatening welfare "reform" bill passed by the Senate Sept. 19. But the legislation's provisions to kill most federal job training programs were removed.

Sponsored by Majority Leader Robert Dole (R-Kan.), H.R. 4 could cost the jobs of current public and private workers, does not create any new jobs for welfare recipients and turns a large part of the nation's welfare system over to private, for-profit operators.

The welfare bill would "have a tremendous negative impact both on the nation's welfare system and on the people who are forced to turn to it for help," AFL-CIO Legislative Director Peggy Taylor said in a letter to the Senate. "While we support reform of welfare, we believe it must go hand-in-hand with a comprehensive job creation and work force development strategy."

Dole's bill creates the potential for large-scale displacement of current workers from both public- and private-sector jobs. The legislation would require most recipients to participate in so-called "workfare" programs.

For example, in New York City, 17,000 municipal workers were laid off during the last several years, while 23,000 workfare participants were assigned to perform their duties of sanitation and clerical work, at one quarter the wages of laid-off workers. These workfare plans penalize low-wage, unskilled workers by forcing them to compete for jobs with welfare recipients earning subminimum wages.

The legislation would convert most entitlement programs to block grants, including Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), the nation's core welfare program. Under a block grant system, during recessionary periods, states would likely be forced to cap enrollment due to a lack of funds.

The Dole bill destroys the existing structure for providing cash assistance to the poor by permitting such assistance as clothing, housing assistance and transportation, instead of cash. In theory at least, a poor family could receive a blanket or "counseling" as it's only form of assistance.

The legislation actively promotes the use of non-government contractors to administer and provide services. States could contract with private, for-profit firms to provide this assistance. This could replace the nonprofit agencies that in some cases supplement state welfare offices.

Elsewhere on Capitol Hill:

DAVIS-BACON — Republicans have long claimed that repealing the Davis-Bacon Act would save the government billions of dollars a year. But they were undercut when their own GOP-dominated Congressional Budget Office said there was no way to prove eliminating Davis-Bacon would actually save the government any money.

The Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee had expected to include repeal of the prevailing wage in its part of the reconciliation bill. But congressional rules require that before any item is included as a cost-saving measure in the bill, those savings must be proved. While separate bills to repeal the law are still pending, the Davis-Bacon Act appears to be safe from reconciliation.

LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION — This program, which provides legal help for the poor, is under attack in the 1996 Commerce, Justice and State Departments' appropriations bills, along with a bill aimed at gutting the program. Nearly 4,000 lawyers and legal workers in the LSC are represented by the UAW.

In the Senate appropriations measure, the program would become part of a block grant, with no requirement that states provide legal services to the poor, and funding is reduced.

The House version maintains the LSC, but drastically reduces its funding and greatly restricts the types of cases LSC lawyers can pursue for their clients.

TEAM ACT — The so-called TEAM Act, which would amend the National Labor Relations Act to allow company unions, will reach the House floor Sept. 27. The bill, H.R. 743, is sponsored by Rep. Steve Gunderson (R-Wis.) and is a favorite of the anti-union corporate forces. Trade unionists are urged to call the AFL-CIO's 800 number, 800/765-4440, to tell representatives to vote against the bill.

Trade adjustment assistance survives panel

By David Kameras

Thanks to intense lobbying by the AFL-CIO, the Republican-dominated Congress reversed itself on a number of trade measures that would have severely weakened worker protections.

The House Ways and Means Committee voted to renew the Generalized System of Preferences for two-and-a-half years, while leaving worker rights conditionality intact. It also voted to extend statutory authority for Section 301 trade sanctions, which for the past two years have existed only at the discretion of the president, and rejected proposed changes to rules of origin that would have seriously harmed textile and apparel workers.

The panel also withdrew a proposal to get rid of Trade Adjustment Assistance as the price paid to give Caribbean Basin Initiative countries the same benefits as those belonging to the North American Free Trade Agreement. Instead, a modified TAA program appears to be in place through 2000.

"The Republicans tried to turn back more than 20 years of settled U.S. policy that sought to address worker rights in the context of trade agreements," said Mark Anderson, director of the AFL-CIO Task Force on Trade. "But the Clinton administration and the Democrats on the committee were all opposed to this GOP initiative.

Democratic leaders had predicted that elimination of TAA would make it very difficult to garner support on their side of the aisle for extension of fast-track negotiating authority, which is considered essential for bringing Chile into NAFTA. With TAA restored, the committee approved on a party-line vote a fast-track bill that excludes labor and environmental provisions as principal objectives in future trade negotiations.

The AFL-CIO had assailed congressional attempts to eliminate trade adjustment assistance to pay for tariff relief for multinational corporations.

"It is difficult to understand how anyone could support a proposal that provides tariff relief for U.S. and foreign multinational corporations, thereby causing the loss of tens of thousands of U.S. jobs, and then pay for these corporate tax breaks by killing programs specifically designed to assist American workers victimized by those corporate actions," AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue said.

TAA benefits were adopted some 33 years ago because "no matter what position one has on trade, everyone agrees that U.S. workers have been and will continue to be, adversely affected by trade," he said. "Rather than killing these needed adjustment programs, they need to be improved."

Among the workers who have been most adversely affected by trade are those in the electronics industry. Just last month, 120 Electronic Workers in Ft. Wayne, Ind., lost their jobs because General Electric expanded its operation in Mexico.

"The NAFTA-TAA program has certified almost 35,000 workers in the last 18 months who have lost their jobs to NAFTA," said IUE President William H. Bywater. "With the soaring trade imbalance with Mexico, thousands of U.S. workers will get no benefits."

NAFTA boosters had predicted that 170,000 jobs would be created by 1995. Since the agreement's enactment, however, an economic slowdown in Mexico combined with a 50 percent devaluation of the peso to turn a $1.1 billion U.S. trade surplus in the first half of 1994 into an $8.6 billion deficit during the same period in 1995. A projected $17 billion deficit for the year would mean a loss of 340,000 jobs in 1995.

A recent report by Public Citizen found that 46 of 51 American companies that predicted they would see U.S. job growth in their firms as a result of NAFTA fell short of their projections, and several cut U.S. jobs.

JOB SAFETY

Campaign tools available

The AFL-CIO has a variety of materials available for trade unionists in the fight for strengthened job safety and health provisions.

Among the materials is a new petition, designed to be distributed at workplaces, town meetings and other community gatherings, so members of Congress can see tangible proof of unionists' determination to Stand UP for Safety and Health. Headlined "We Didn't Vote for Unsafe Workplaces," the petition also is available in Spanish.

Also available are ads, issue briefs and action alerts. For copies of these materials or other information about the Republican assault on worker safety, contact the AFL-CIO Department of Occupational Safety and Health at 202/637-5366.

OSHA cuts unpopular

Two-thirds of American workers say Congress should not limit the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's ability to require employers to comply with workplace safety standards, a new poll reveals.

In the survey of 800 employees, conducted by Fingerhut-Granados for the Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers, 81 percent said regular OSHA inspections would make a difference. Sixty-two percent said employers would take health and safety issues more seriously if they knew they could expect such inspections. Nearly half of those surveyed said they thought their employer would cut corners on safety if it meant protecting profits.

In addition, 56 percent of respondents from low-risk worksites reported at least one job-related injury or illness in the past two years.

"During the upcoming budget debate, many dubious claims will be made about OSHA," said BCT President Frank Hurt. "The information released today proves workers feel more, not less, is required in both enforcement and compliance with current OSHA standards."

Asbestos changes sought

The AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department has asked a federal appeals court to set aside some changes in the asbestos standard for construction issued by OSHA in June.

BCTD cited a June 29 corrections document containing substantive changes, particularly to worker training requirements, made as a result of discussions with the American Petroleum Institute. The department pointed out API had not challenged the previous rule.

In a letter to OSHA Administrator Joseph A. Dear, BCTD said it was "extremely disturbing" changes would be made to accommodate a group that had not filed a legal challenge — an "obvious violation" of the procedural requirements of the OSHAct, the group said.

BCTD filed its petition with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

Teens are in harm's way on jobs

By Colleen M. O'Neill

More and more teenagers are joining the work force, placing a greater number of teens in harm's way on the job.

The development raises not only concerns about health and safety in the workplace, but also the burgeoning use of child labor in this country.

"We've seen in recent months a rise in the number of sweatshops 'discovered' here in the United States," said John Zalusky of the AFL-CIO Economic Research Department. "It's really not a giant step to go from sweatshops to child labor.

The General Accounting Office estimated that in 1988, 18 percent — or 166,000 — of employed 15-year-olds worked in violation of child labor laws. From 1983 to 1989, the number of such detected violations increased from 9,200 to 22,000.

Adolescents should be discouraged from taking on employment, Zalusky said, because long hours on the job eat into school time, minimizing academic performance. That, in turn, means such major employers as General Motors, IBM and the like have to spend time and resources on remedial education for employees to bring them up to speed.

"We really should want to keep our kids in school," he said.

In addition, he said, there is the very real threat of physical harm to adolescents who are still growing and maturing.

For instance, Zalusky said, injuries associated with paper balers, which are large machines similar to trash compactors used in grocery stores to compress packing materials, "aren't pinched fingers or pinched hands; they're usually maiming-type injuries or even death."

While industry has long sought a more permissive standard, there have been more than 50 accidents — and six fatalities — recorded among those using the machines since 1991.

Current law prohibits workers under age 18 from working with paper balers. The Republican-led Congress, however, has signaled its intent to appease its business supporters by relaxing that rule and other health and safety rules that might affect adolescent workers.

The House-passed 1996 appropriations measure for the Department of Labor, for example, cuts the budget for the Wage and Hour Division — which is charged with enforcing child labor laws — by 12 percent.

Trade unions long have led the fight against child labor, beating it back at the beginning of the century and continuing as the standard-bearer as the century draws to a close. Unions, along with consumer groups and religious organizations, work through the Child Labor Coalition to end the exploitation of children in the labor market, both in the United States and internationally.

This country's sheer number of working teens, coupled with lax enforcement of child labor and safety laws have spurred publication of bulletins on the dangers by the Child Safety Network and the Massachusetts Occupational Health Surveillance Program, as well as the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

"Protecting Working Teens: A Public Health Resource Guide," produced by the Child Safety Network, bears witness to the grim environment many teens face on the job. An estimated 64,000 14-year-olds to 17-year-olds were treated for work-related injuries in hospital emergency rooms during 1992, the guide pointed out, while private employers reported 97,000 injuries or illnesses resulting in at least one day of missed work to workers age 19 and under during 1993.

> *"It's really not a giant step to go from sweatshops to child labor. We really should want to keep our kids in school."*
>
> — AFL-CIO economist John Zalusky

Additionally, a Massachusetts study of emergency room data found that between 7 percent and 13 percent of all medically treated injuries to 14-year-olds to 17-year-olds were work-related.

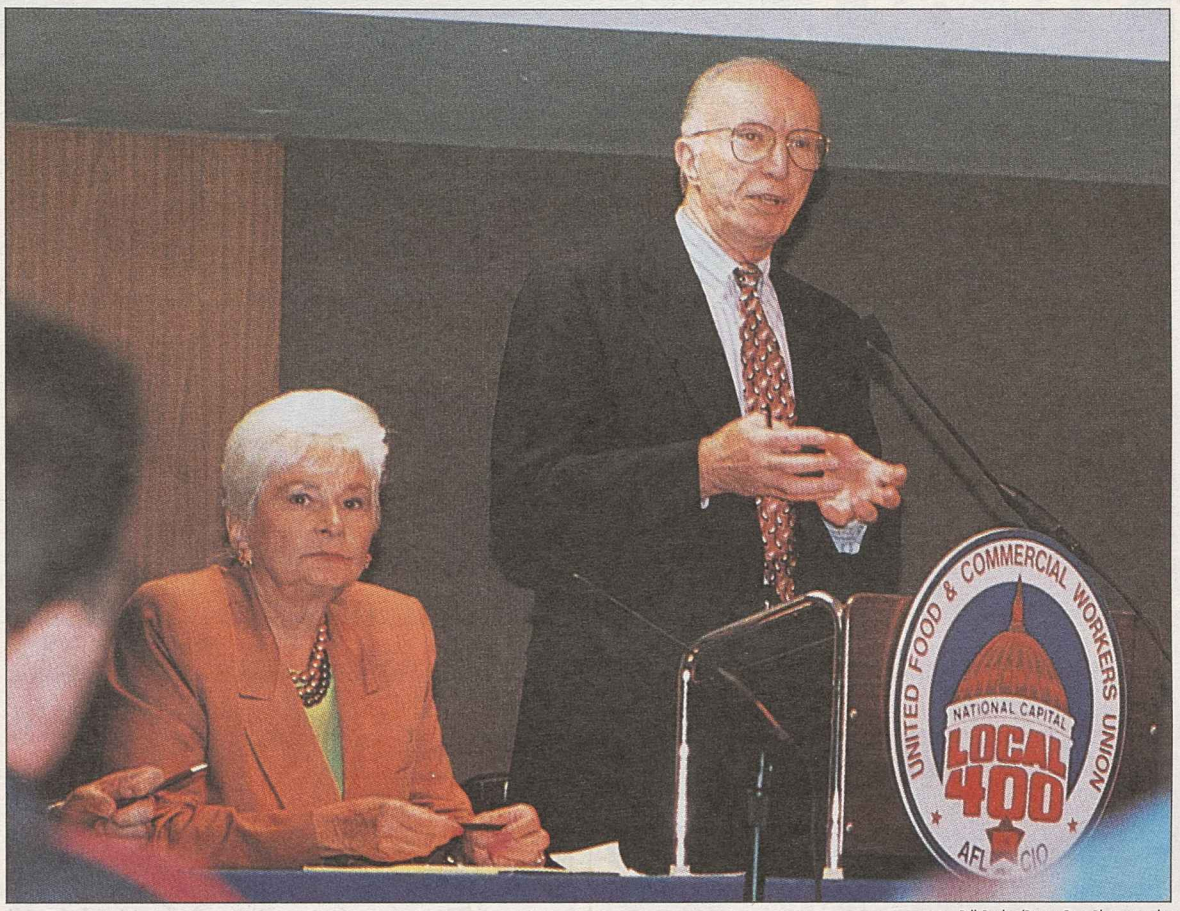
Teen workers, like their adult counterparts, face the very real specter of death on the job also. NIOSH found that 670 16- and 17-year-olds died at work from 1980 to 1989. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics further identified 136 work-related deaths of teens under age 18 in 1992 and 1993.

The Child Safety Network guide points out the factors raising special concerns about working adolescents:

- Teens typically put in a full day of school before going to work at a series of part-time, temporary, low-paying jobs in industries with higher-than-average injury rates, like grocery and department stores, hospitals and nursing facilities and recreational services.
- Federal child labor laws have seen no extensive revision in 30 years.
- As new workers, adolescents are likely to be inexperienced and unfamiliar with many of the tasks required of them, unable to recognize workplace hazards and unaware of their rights as workers.
- Small teens may not be able to reach parts of machines and may lack the strength required for certain tasks; larger teens may be given adult tasks simply because of their size, without regard for their lack of experience and maturity.
- Parents, medical providers and school personnel often lack the information necessary to ensure a good fit between the work environment and young workers.

Among the most dangerous occupations for teens cited by NIOSH are working in or around motor vehicles, operating tractors and other heavy equipment, working near electrical hazards and at heights, working around cooking appliances and hazardous manual lifting.

The Child Safety Network guide urged the adoption of a number of prevention strategies, including redesign of the workplace or work processes in jobs commonly held by youth; stronger enforcement of child labor laws; and education about health and safety hazards and safeguards, as well as workplace rights and responsibilities.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue and Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling meet with members of UFCW Local 400, which scored a major organizing victory using card-check authorization at Hecht's department stores. The meeting was part of Donahue's pledge to regularly visit rank-and-file members in their union halls.

Organizing victories run gamut

Unions use innovations in variety of workplaces

By Muriel H. Cooper

In a burst of activity marked by innovative techniques and creative strategies, unions have recorded a number of recent organizing victories.

The wins have run the gamut of American industry — from retail stores and nursing homes to canneries and lamp manufacturers, from clerical and service workers to lawyers at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and fashion models **(See story, Page 15).**

Food and Commercial Workers Local 400 gained the right to represent nearly 2,000 hourly employees of the Hecht Co. department store chain in Washington, after gaining card-check authorization in a sale agreement with Hecht's parent, May Department Store Co. of St. Louis.

May agreed to voluntarily recognize the local at its area stores through a card check as part of a deal in which it purchased Woodward & Lothrop, a Washington chain whose workers were represented by Local 400. The UFCW local had gained leverage with its own bid for the stores through an employee stock ownership plan.

Besides recognizing the local to represent about 400 workers at a Woodward & Lothrop store and at a distribution center converted to Hecht's, the company agreed to extend the contract to nine existing nonunion stores if UFCW could gain support among the employees.

Local 400 President Tom McNutt Jr. said the effort showed how a good relationship and understanding with an employer can avoid the potential friction of an election and give employees a free choice.

Service Employees Local 1199 used its bottom-up "member-organizing" program to gain 244 new members at two nursing homes and a juvenile facility in Ohio.

Workers at Lima's Lost Creek Nursing Home voted union by 42-35 and Shawnee Manor Nursing Home picked SEIU in a 68-61 vote. Workers at Sargus Center, a Belmont juvenile facility, voted 25-0 for union representation by the local, which serves workers in Ohio, West Virginia and Kentucky.

The elections grew out of a program that utilizes union members in intensive five-week blitzes to help recruit new members. The local's organizing successes have been attributed to the amout of money — about 50 percent of its budget — spent on organizing.

The Service Employees now are conducting a nationwide "Dignity" campaign among nursing home workers **(See story, Page 10)**.

The Teamsters used their "worker-to-worker" approach to score wins in California's San Joaquin Valley, Huntsville, Tenn., and Milwaukee.

The IBT sent in organizers with the same work experience and ethnic backgrounds as the workers at Toma-Tek, a tomato cannery in California. They successfully convinced the 550 workers to join the union.

IBT Locals 200 and 344 are credited with helping to organize 430 workers at Pfister & Vogel's Milwaukee tannery. The workers sought representation after becoming frustrated when company managers cut vacation days, refused to honor seniority rights and ignored other worker concerns.

The 318 workers at the Fruehauf Trailer Corp. in Tennessee voted for the IBT despite an intensive anti-union campaign by the employer.

"Workers are fed up with taking it on the chin," said IBT President Ron Carey. "These victories show that workers will choose union representation when they see that other workers and the community are standing behind them."

More than 100 workers at BMP, a seismic retrofit company in Emeryville, Calif., voted overwhelmingly for representation by the Carpenters.

Organizer Jay Bradshaw said the win should be credited to "the mostly Latino work force that took on this campaign as their very own and stood strong to the end."

Proving "Si Se Puede — Yes, it can be done," organizers set up three teams to scatter among the 16 polling sites located throughout the Bay area.

The Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, meanwhile, picked up more than 700 new members at five different shops in a victory streak leading up to Labor Day.

More than 300 of those new RWDSU members work at Southern Frozen Foods in Montezuma, Ga. Nearly 200 workers are at Commercial Aviation Services, which cleans airplanes at New York's JFK airport.

Almost 80 workers at Crown Casting, a lamp manufacturer in Midland Park, N.J., now have respect on the job after they voted for RWDSU and then quickly ratified their first contract.

Workers at two Alabama plants, the Center Star, which assembles shirts, and Oakline Swings, a manufacturer of children's swing sets, also voted for representation by RWDSU.

Only one vote (300-1) kept the Pasadena Association of Clerical and Technical Employees from being unanimous in their affiliation with Laborers Local 777. The unit will cover city clerical workers, police assistants and other professional employees.

Another group of professional employees — the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's General Counsels — voted to be represented by a local of the Marine Engineers. Out of the 53 mailed ballots, 26 voted yes, 13 no and 1 ballot was voided.

Council boosts organizing and political action

Continued from Page 1

AFL-CIO in 1996 "will put 500 union staff in the field from Labor Day to Election Day to mount the largest and most effective political operation in our history — double the number fielded in 1994," Donahue told reporters after the meeting.

In approving a funding schedule for the organizing trust fund, the council also authorized the use of the federation's reserve fund to supplement the organizing fund if the Union Privilege negotiations did not immediately yield the expected $5 million next year.

Those negotiations would be over royalty fees for use of the name and logo of the federation and its unions in producing the highly popular Union Privilege MasterCard, which is generating large amounts of cash for the bank. Not only should the negotiations yield at least $20 million in royalty payments to the federation after three years, but also an equal amount in servicing fees that can be returned to the unions who participate in the program, Donahue said.

Any union participating in the credit card program can opt out if it does not want the money to go into the organizing fund, which it then could not use, Donahue said. But unions who do not participate in the credit card program would still be eligible to use the funds.

The Norton committee will continue its work to develop a concrete plan for the administration and operation of the fund, but Norton told the council that the committee agreed that the Organizing Institute, the highly successful organizing training arm, should have a role with the fund.

"They will continue training, but they also should expand to have input in the organizing campaigns that these funds are used in, so that we can be reasonably assured that we're spending money on campaigns in which we can get first contracts."

Donahue said he expected there also would be a committee of the council that would help to select the campaigns, as well as an advisory committee for oversight.

Grass-roots training set

In reviewing the federation's grass-roots political and legislative activity, Donahue told the council, "the literal crisis we find ourselves in on the Hill cannot be overstated. The Republicans have shown they will use every section of the appropriations and reconciliation process to kill critical programs for workers."

He reported that "the radio and TV ads helped to intensify the grass-roots activity in the 35 targeted congressional districts during the August recess." Additional television ads were purchased on CNN and Washington TV stations after Congress returned, part of nearly $3 million the federation has spent on Stand UP campaign advertising this year.

"One of the most successful programs we used is the toll-free telephone number, which included people going into workplaces with cellular phones and asking workers to call their representatives," Donahue said. "We've logged more than 100,000 calls since mid-February."

The development of grass-roots activists is being led by Susan Washington, appointed by Donahue in August to be the associate director of the legislative department. She told the council that the training program was being guided by a grass-roots task force involving affiliated unions.

"We are developing a model program for grass-roots legislative and political activism that can be easily adapted for use by affiliates," she said. "We will offer a menu of actions that can be used in various campaigns."

The program will seek to identify and recruit unionists at the local level, then train them to communicate issues with members and to show them how to act politically. Training tools will be provided, as well as campaign tools — including leaflets, direct mail, phone banks, surveys and petitions.

Washington said workshops have been scheduled for October in Indiana, Wisconsin, Alabama, Arkansas, Massachusetts and Kentucky. Workshops also are being held during state AFL-CIO conventions and affiliate union meetings.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Fund readied for AFGE

The AFL-CIO is working to help create a $5 million contingency fund for low- and no-interest loans for government employees in case of a government shutdown, the Executive Council was told.

The council had approved in August a plan to provide interest-free loans of up to $1 million to any union that needs strike assistance. AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue told the council the federation is now working with a Washington bank to make money available to AFGE if there is a government "lockout."

Legislative Director Peggy Taylor told the council a shutdown is likely around mid-November, when a six-week stopgap spending bill expires with several appropriations bills still unsigned.

Corporate campaigns work

AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue told reporters that attacks by corporations and their Republican cronies in Congress on union corporate campaigns are an acknowledgement of "our ability to plague them. It's a great tribute to the work we've been doing."

At the request of management associations, the House Economic and Educational Opportunities subcommittee on oversight and investigations will hold hearings in November on whether the campaigns violate the National Labor Relations Act.

Unions have increasingly and successfully used sophisticated corporate campaigns to pressure companies to negotiate fair contracts. Such campaigns usually employ media campaigns, community coalition building, stockholder resolutions and leafleting of a company's customers.

Besides appealing to Congress, corporations also have lashed out at unions with frivolous suits filed under the Racketeering Influenced Corruption Act (RICO), the council was told.

Health care issues discussed

In the absence of full-scale health care reform, unions are finding it increasingly difficult to bargain for benefits, with many being pushed toward such managed care plans as health maintenance organizations.

An AFL-CIO conference on managed care, held at the George Meany Center for Labor Studies Sept. 19-20, was reported by Health Care Committee Chairman John J. Sweeney of the Service Employees.

Among the conference topics were how to organize union health care purchasing power, negotiating quality and access to care and case studies of health care workers and union contracts, and the effect of managed care initiatives upon them.

Disaster aid confirmed

The Executive Council approved a $10,000 donation to help relief efforts in the U.S. Virgin Islands in the wake of Hurricane Marilyn.

In addition, letters will be sent to all unions asking for their participation in fund-raising efforts. The federation also has a Red Cross liaison in the islands.

The Steelworkers have 10,000 members there, "none of them now with a house," said USWA President George Becker, while the federal and postal unions and AFT also have a substantial number of island members.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Senate Minority Leader Thomas A. Daschle (D-S.D.) seeks labor's help in fighting anti-worker GOP legislation.

Convention changes in offing

By Rex Hardesty

The Executive Council worked out a tentative schedule for the Oct. 23-26 AFL-CIO convention and agreed on a series of committees and procedures to iron out potential trouble spots.

A constitutional amendment will be recommended to move up nominations for office by one day, to Tuesday, with a two-hour debate between the presidential candidates after the nominations. The candidates for secretary-treasurer also will debate, for one hour, with media members as potential moderators. Balloting would also move up one day, to Wednesday.

The council approved President Tom Donahue's plans to have the full council sit as a rules committee, but many of the committee and schedule arrangements will not need to go back to the rules committee.

Donahue said many of the arrangements were worked out in talks between him and his opponent for president, John J. Sweeney of the Service Employees. The convention rules will call for an impartial election officer, and the talks between the two campaigns will continue.

The council will meet a day early, on Friday, Oct. 20, allowing time for its traditional Saturday morning session if that is also necessary. Similarly, the convention schedule left room for evening sessions if needed.

The tentative schedule for the convention includes:

Monday — Opening ceremonies, keynote and credentials committee report in the morning, with the constitution and rules committees reporting in the afternoon. Sweeney has proposed creation of a third office, executive vice president, which would require a constitutional amendment. A two-thirds majority on a roll call vote is needed to amend the AFL-CIO constitution.

Tuesday — Nominations for office.

Wednesday — Voting with paper ballots, in the morning, with a return to convention business in the afternoon and on Thursday.

Donahue warned that while the New York Sheraton Hotel & Towers has more guest rooms than the federation usually requires for a convention, the ballroom is relatively small. Alternates and guests may have to be assigned to adjoining rooms with closed-circuit TV.

The council also split the traditional convention resolutions committees in two, with one handling public policy issues and working with the same structure of five subcommittees the federation historically has used. That committee will be chaired by John N. Sturdivant of the Government Employees and will begin work the Wednesday before the convention.

The second committee will deal with internal issues as the Committee on AFL-CIO Programs, Procedure and Policies. That committee, Donahue said, can begin work well before the convention to iron out contentious issues.

Albert Shanker of the AFT will chair that committee, with Arthur A. Coia of the Laborers as secretary and a membership of Morton Bahr of the Communications Workers, Moe Biller of the Postal Workers, James E. Hatfield of the Glass, Molders and Pottery Workers, James J. Norton of Graphic Communications, George J. Kourpias of the Machinists, Joe L. Greene of the School Administrators, Sonny Hall of the Transport Workers, James LaSala of Amalagamated Transit, Marilyn Lenard of the Florida AFL-CIO and A.L. "Mike" Monroe of the Painters.

The Credentials Committee will have Robert A. Georgine of the Building Trades as president and Stephen P. Yokich of the UAW as secretary. Committee members include William H. Bywater of the Electronic Workers, Edward T. Hanley of the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees, Michael Sacco of the Seafarers, Vincent R. Sombrotto of the Letter Carriers, Patricia Friend of the Flight Attendants, Robert A. Scardelletti of the Transportation Communication Workers and Robert E. Wages of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers.

Bricklayers President John T. Joyce will chair the Constitution Committee, with Steelworkers President George F. Becker as secretary. The members are John J. Barry of the Electrical Workers, Ron Carey of the Teamsters, Douglas H. Dority of the Food and Commercial Workers, Frank Hanley of the Operating Engineers, Frank Hurt of the Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers, Lenore Miller of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, Michael Goodwin of the Office and Professional Employees, Arthur Moore of the Sheet Metal Workers, Arturo S. Rodriguez of the Farm Workers, Jake West of the Iron Workers, Alfred K. Whitehead of the Fire Fighters and Sturdivant.

AFL-CIO vows to lead way to full participation in labor

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

The AFL-CIO vowed to provide more opportunities for women and minorities, calling for "full and diversified participation" at every level of the labor movement.

"Not only union members, but also unorganized workers, look at unions to see if their leadership, staff and structure reflect an atmosphere in which all members are visible and welcome to participate," the council said in a statement.

Full participation goals are "best served when an organization works from clear policies and the commitment of officers to achieving these goals through performance," the council declared.

The AFL-CIO will lead the way to full participation and diversity in its national, state and local organizations by:

- Amending the rules for state and local AFL-CIOs to provide for procedures for achieving diversity in executive bodies, in committees and at conventions.
- Permitting expansion in the size of governing bodies elected or appointed by state and local AFL-CIOs.
- Providing local chapters of AFL-CIO-supported organizations representing diversified memberships with an appropriate form of expanded participation in state and local AFL-CIOs.

The council said the AFL-CIO would provide assistance and guidance to all labor organizations, with programs to encourage under-represented groups of workers, specific plans for inclusion of more women and minority members in educational programs and a resumé referral service to provide information to affiliates on qualified women and minorities for staff positions.

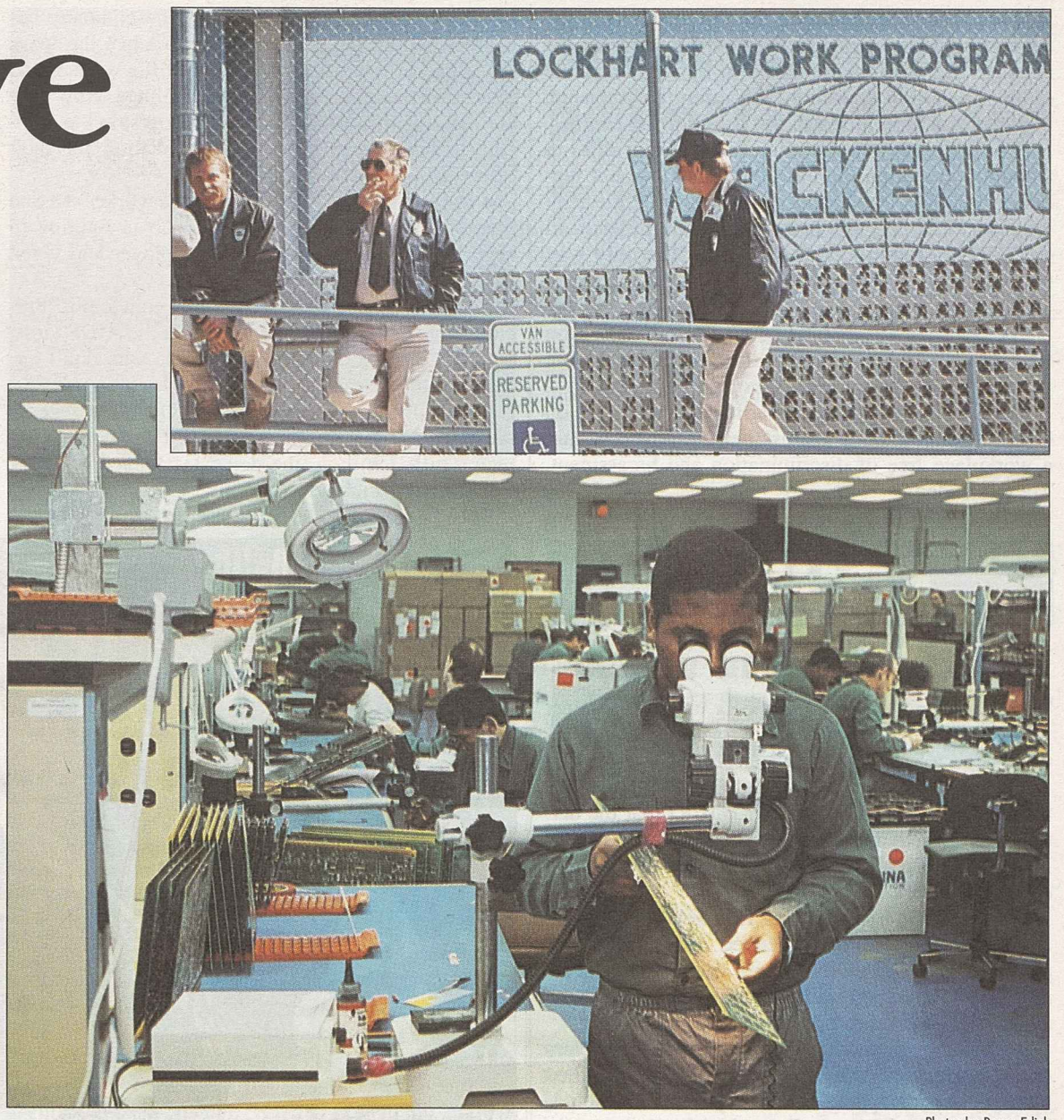
"The AFL-CIO will maintain and continue its affirmative action program for filling headquarters and field staff vacancies," the council said, extending the effort to the AFL-CIO executive officers and the Executive Council, with the "review of all AFL-CIO standing and ad hoc committees and . . . appropriate appointments to assure diversity of representation."

The federation will call on its support groups — including the Coalition of Labor Union Women, the A. Philip Randolph Institute, Frontlash, the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement and the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance — to review and expand leadership training and development programs.

Government Employees President John N. Sturdivant, who chairs the Full Participation Committee, reported that a resolution is being prepared for the convention on the issue.

Captive Labor

More industries and governments are turning to cellblocks to find exploitable and compliant workers



Photos by Reese Erlich

Prisoners assemble personal computer boards for Lockhart Technologies Inc. at a work program facility in Lockhart, Texas, run by Wackenhut, whose guards patrol the perimeter, above.

By David Kameras

Oregon state Rep. Kevin Mannix says he's sick and tired of seeing companies like Nike ship American jobs to cheap-labor havens like Indonesia, where its subcontractors pay workers $1.20 a day.

But Mannix's solution is no solution at all for workers in Oregon, or any community.

"We propose that they take a look at their transportation costs and their labor costs," he said. "We could offer prison inmate labor."

Mannix has plenty of support for his idea among U.S. businesses, which believe they have discovered a way to get a lock on an endless supply of cheap labor, while being able to slap a "Made in the U.S.A." label on their goods.

Even as they try to dismantle federal mandates on labor standards, large corporations are circumventing the law by tapping into a literally captive pool of incarcerated men and women, who are coerced into paying their debt to society while paying the debts of their employers as well.

"This is work that is not voluntary," noted AFL-CIO economist John Zalusky. "These prisoners are being compelled to work."

The result is exploitation behind prison walls, while communities lose out on job opportunities.

The Correctional Industries Association predicts that by the year 2000, 30 percent of the federal and state inmate population will be working, producing $8.9 billion in goods and services. With 520,000 inmates working, that will mean a net loss of 400,000 private-sector jobs.

Other employers are left competing against employers that frequently pay well below the prevailing wage, sometimes nothing at all, and provide no workers' compensation, unemployment insurance, FICA, FUTA or other mandated benefits. They pay neither health nor retirement benefits. Many of the products are exempt from federal rules governing interstate commerce.

Wage earners pay the price

Prison systems use inmate labor largely for any of three reasons: to cover the cost of incarceration, to rehabilitate prisoners and to control or manage convicts.

There are other ways to meet the latter objective, such as education programs and housekeeping chores. The Electrical Workers, for example, administer a training program in San Quentin that has been successful in giving convicts skills that have been used to acquire good jobs after release.

But with Congress eliminating Pell grants and other learning opportunities, and with time off for good behavior jeopardized by current anti-crime sentiment, alternatives are becoming harder to find.

"We all want convicts to be occupied," said Zalusky. "The question is what they are doing with their time.

"Wage earners, including the people who guard prisons, are being asked to pay the price for society's failure to address the root causes of crime," he said.

Further, as prison-made products move into America's export markets, they pose huge risks to the nation's trading relationships. "If we shift this work into goods going overseas, foreign producers will see it as unfair competition, as slave labor," Zalusky said. "And they'll be right. Retaliation could then be targeted at other product areas, such as automobiles."

Honda Motors likes to project the image of a friendly workplace, where an enlightened management makes unions unnecessary. But outside the plant gates, Honda subcontracted parts-assembly work to Weastec Corp. in Ohio, which in turn paid $2.05 an hour to the state for its prison labor. The prisoners got 35 cents an hour.

After organized labor and state legislators increased public awareness and brought pressure to bear on the automaker, Honda stopped the practice in 1992. "No smaller employer could compete for that contract with Honda," said UAW Region 2 Director Warren Davis. Still, 18 companies continue to employ 700 prisoners in Ohio.

An American gulag?

In addition to Honda, those benefiting from the American prison labor system have included:

- Brill Manufacturing Co. in Michigan, where furniture workers lost their $5.65-an-hour jobs to state prison inmates earning as little as 56 cents an hour.
- A Toys 'R' Us store in Aurora, Ill., which stopped using convicts to stock shelves only after an effective boycott by the IBEW and the Food and Commercial Workers.
- Trans World Airlines, which uses juvenile offenders near Santa Barbara, Calif., to take phone reservations.
- Best Western Hotels and Motels, which only recently stopped using prisoners to take reservations.
- A privately owned jail in Lockhart, Texas, operated by Wackenhut, where prisoners assemble printed circuit boards for computer makers like IBM, Compaq and Dell, displacing workers from a now-closed plant in Austin, 30 miles down the road.
- Various private companies that use San Quentin convicts to perform data-entry tasks.
- Inmates in Washington state doing telephone solicitation work, including in one instance campaign calls for a Republican congressional candidate.

While Congress debates whether to authorize a long-overdue increase in the federal minimum wage, subminimum wages are paid daily in American prisons to workers lacking the most elementary civil rights, let alone access to the collective bargaining process.

One might expect Congress, which pays substantial lip service to job creation, would at least try to intervene. And it has — on behalf of those profiting off of prison labor.

An amendment to the defense authorization bill introduced this year by Rep. Jim Kolbe (R-Ariz.) sought to open the vast national security market to those who exploit the incarcerated by tapping the "state/local prison labor pool to do routine maintenance." That's a euphemism for building trades work that often poses high occupational health risk, such as lead paint removal, for which prisoners are not trained.

Kolbe bemoans the fact that there is no federal statute permiting the use of these workers by federal agencies.

"The use of prison labor provides opportunities to preserve facilities and prevent deterioration where current funding is inadequate or wholly unavailable," said Kolbe, who apparently sees this as a viable means of helping foot the bill for his party's proposed tax cut for the wealthy.

Capitalizing injustice

The shift toward state-level prison labor seems to be part of a greater trend toward viewing correctional facilities less as places of rehabilitation and more as profit centers.

Earlier this year, the Illinois Legislature's Commerce and Industry Committee passed a bill to privatize the state's prisons. In a variant on digging one's own grave, the legislation as originally drafted would have had the prisoners themselves erecting their own jail.

Proponents claim that taxpayers can save 25 percent on construction costs, but "there's only one place they're getting that kind of money, and that's from the workers' paychecks," said Illinois AFL-CIO President Donald A. Johnson. "Passage of this bill would be devastating to those who construct, repair and maintain our prisons, as well as to the correction officers."

Voters in Oregon recently approved a ballot referendum requiring state prison inmates to spend 40 hours a week on the job or in job training, with their products exempt from competitive bidding rules. Some inmates get to sew blue jeans called "Prison Blues."

First IBT civil rights conference urges unity

More than 500 Teamsters in Washington for the union's first civil rights conference delivered the message that workers are united in fighting corporate efforts to destroy education, job safety enforcement, Medicare and other programs that help working families.

"The corporate special interests and their allies in Congress are using the old divide-and-conquer tactics to turn workers against each other, while they wipe out every program that working families depend on," IBT President Ron Carey said. "The only way to fight back is to build unity among all working people."

The Sept. 15-17 conference was designed to gain tools to fight discrimination on the job and to get more women and people of color involved in the union.

Many of the conference participants reported on battles they are waging against their employers to gain a workplace free of discrimination and harassment. They included:

● Several female Latino workers at a Nabisco plant in Oxnard, Calif., who have sued the company because it would not allow women to leave the work line to go to the bathroom. Some of the women had to wear diapers to avoid being disciplined. Now they are building a community campaign to stop the company from eliminating jobs in retaliation for their efforts to win fair treatment.

● Antonio Rublo, a minimum-wage worker at a San Joaquin Valley tomato cannery, who is fighting to keep his job after he defied his employer and voted to join a union.

● A Teamster whose 4-year-old grandchild, Precious Thomas, is living not only with the AIDS virus, but with the discrimination of people who don't understand the disease.

The IBT members also carried their message to lawmakers. After briefings from IBT Legislative Director Bill Hamilton, the delegates fanned out over Capitol Hill to lobby.

Race and gender are being used to distract people from the economic war being waged on workers, Carey said. "They're telling workers in this country that the big issues are not jobs, or health care, or pensions, or safety on the job. They say the big issues are affirmative action, immigration, welfare and crime.

Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.) rallied the delegates by reminding them that, despite all the right-wing attacks on working people, the labor movement remains strong because people want to be a part of something bigger than themselves that is working for good.

Other speakers included AFSCME Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson; Kent Wong, president of Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance; Rep. Cynthia McKinney (D-Ga.); NAACP Chair Myrlie Evers-Williams; Rev. Joseph Lowery, president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference; and Mayor Marion Barry of Washington.

— James B. Parks

COURTS

Project agreement upheld

The California Court of Appeals upheld a project labor agreement for union contractors and subcontractors on a $450 million water project.

The court ruled in Associated Builders and Contractors vs. Contra Costa Water District that the district was not required by law to award contracts to the lowest qualified bidder and that the rights of nonunion contractors were not violated.

Judge P.J. Peterson, writing for the court, rejected arguments that state laws dictated construction contracts be awarded to the lowest bidder, saying the relevant law only requires the lowest bidder be awarded a contract to operate the facility.

Project agreements, which guarantee contractors quality controls because of a reliable supply of skilled labor, have been upheld in a variety of courts, including a landmark Supreme Court decision last year in the Boston Harbor cleanup case.

New liability test adopted

A unanimous National Labor Relations Board ordered the owners of a Virginia coal mine to personally pay for back wages because of their unlawful refusal to reinstate striking Mine Workers.

With the order, the board adopted an updated standard for cases that "pierced the corporate veil," where it is impossible to distinguish the personalities and assets of shareholders from that of the corporation. The NLRB said shareholders can be held personally liable when they fail to maintain separate identities and when adhering to the corporate structure would sanction a fraud or lead to evasion of legal obligations.

The case began in 1981 when Jerry and Arlene Deel set up White Oak Coal Co. in Dickenson County, Va. The company was a party to the UMWA's contract with the Bituminous Coal Operators. The Deels set up another company, JAP Leasing, in 1984 to hold its mining equipment. In December 1984, negotiations with UMWA District 28 failed and the union began an unfair labor practices strike. The White Oak mine closed in December 1986.

The board found that the Deels routinely ignored the corporate structure and diverted corporate funds for personal use.

Campbell retirees can sue

A federal judge allowed the Food and Commercial Workers and retirees of Campbell Soup Co. to sue the company for unilaterally reducing health insurance benefits.

Judge Stanley S. Brotman of New Jersey ruled that the retirees and union have a right to file a claim for breach of fiduciary duties under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) because the company failed to inform beneficiaries when changes were made in the plan documents.

Campbell established the plan in 1964 and issued plan summaries in 1970. It restructured the plan in 1987, giving the president of the company the right to amend the plan at any time, including termination. Again in 1992, the plan was modified to increase out-of-pocket costs for retirees.

The company had a responsibility to inform the beneficiaries when the plan was amended, Brotman said.



Photo by Tom Efrin

Leaders of the three major Brazilian trade union federations (front row, from left), CGT President Antonio Francisco, Forca Sindical Vice President Ricardo Baldino and CUT President Vicente Paulo da Silva, listen to remarks during a welcoming ceremony at AFL-CIO headquarters.

U.S., Brazilian unionists pursue rights

By James B. Parks

The people of Brazil and the United States share a common history of racial struggle. But it is the U.S. legacy of the civil rights movement that convinced Brazilian trade union leaders to join with U.S. unionists in an effort to fight racial and sexual discrimination.

About 30 leaders of three Brazilian trade union federations — CUT, CGT and Forca Sindical — explored common ground with U.S. unionists during a second conference at the George Meany Center for Labor Studies.

After a week of discussions, the trade unionists proposed jointly organizing the Martin Luther King/Zumbi dos Palmares Foundation, named for martyrs for racial justice in each country. The foundation would focus attention on the issue of forced labor in Brazil, as well as serve as a conduit for information on legislation and other strategies for increasing racial and gender equality.

AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue reminded the conference that Brazil and the United States share the "very sad distinction of being two of the most unequal societies in the world, in terms of income distribution."

The "bottom line," Donahue said, is that in the United States and Brazil, "people with lighter skin have a vast unfair advantage over people of color — an advantage in income, wealth, education and political representation. And that violates our most precious principles.

"People of color in the United States and Brazil are overwhelmingly working people. No one needs strong, militant, independent unions more than they do," he said.

The conference follows last year's historic meeting in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, between trade unionists from both countries to discuss issues relating to racial equality. The latest conference was coordinated by the AFL-CIO Civil Rights Department and the American Institute for Free Labor Development.

The U.S. delegates emphasized that the keys to gaining justice for Brazil's black majority include building racial consciousness, developing coalitions and nonviolent political involvement.

Affirmative action is a major issue in both countries, panelists said. Coalition of Labor Union Women President Gloria Johnson told the conference the political debate over affirmative action in the United States has an impact on all world labor and any group promoting race and gender equality.

Brazilians opposed to affirmative action point to the U.S. debate as an example of what could happen if the policy is implemented there, said Neide Foncesa of CUT. But such laws are necessary, she said, because anti-discrimination laws are not enforced. Black Brazilians and women are relegated to low-paying jobs. Black Brazilian women are paid about half of the minimum wage black men receive.

The Brazilians plan to take the issue of discrimination to the streets in November, marching to various state capitals and culminating in a Nov. 20 rally to demand equal rights legislation and a greater understanding of the extent of discrimination in the country. The rally, which will be attended by U.S. trade unionists as well, will commemorate the 300th anniversary of the assassination of Zumbi dos Palmares, the legendary leader of free slaves.

During a visit to Capitol Hill, the Brazilians met with Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.). Other speakers included: A. Philip Randolph Institute President Norman Hill; AFSCME Secretary-Treasurer William Lucy; AFL-CIO Civil Rights Director Richard Womack; Al Montoya, executive director of the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement; Luis Anderson, secretary-general of ORIT, the Inter-American Regional Organization of Workers; June Shong of the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance; and Mike McPherson of the Metropolitan Washington AFL-CIO.

Staley given graphic view of its injustice

Workers, joined by clergy in chains, fast for rights

By James B. Parks

Every day around the clock, locked-out workers at A.E. Staley in Decatur, Ill., are graphically demonstrating the company's immorality, some fasting and some chaining their bodies to the plant fence.

Dan Lane, a devout Catholic and 19-year Staley worker, began an open-ended fast Sept. 1 to bring attention to the workers' plight and to convince Staley's largest customer, PepsiCo, to drop its business until a fair contract is signed.

"My fasting comes as a difficult decision for me and my family," said Lane, a decorated Vietnam veteran and father of five. "But even more difficult is to stand by and watch A.E. Staley's aggression on 750 locked-out workers and their families."

In a letter to Wayne Callaway, PepsiCo chief executive officer, Lane asked that the company, which denies playing any part in the dispute, sever its ties with Staley until there is a fair contract.

"It is outright ludicrous to say that PepsiCo has no responsibility when in fact your dollars are the breath of Staley's business," Lane wrote. "As one of Staley's biggest customers, PepsiCo dollars support life-threatening demands on locked-out workers.

"There is no doubt in my mind that if PepsiCo would withdraw its business, Staley would come to realize the serious consequences of terrorizing our community," Lane added.

Members of Paperworkers Local 7837 and supporters, including clergy and spouses, also are chaining themselves in rotating 12-hour shifts to the fence outside the Staley gate. "The chaining is symbolic of what the company is asking of the workers," said Rev. Martin Mangan, rector of St. James Catholic Church and a leader of the Decatur Area Religious Leaders for Justice at Staley.

"Twelve-hour shifts are immoral. Rotating every six days is immoral. Community members are taking a stand in this struggle for justice and human dignity," he said.

The Staley dispute has gone beyond an economic dispute, Mangan said. "It raises questions of justice, questions of ethics, questions of morality."

Lane took those questions to London Sept. 22 as he joined international religious leaders in confronting Staley's parent company, Tate and Lyle.

Other locked-out workers and supporters are joining in with three-day fasts until Oct. 1. "We are outraged at the ravaging of our town," said Judy Dulaney, wife of a locked-out worker. "Staley has shown nothing but a completely callous attitude towards this community."

Local 7837 has asked members and supporters to fast along with Lane "as they are able," said Janey McKinney, whose husband is a locked-out worker.

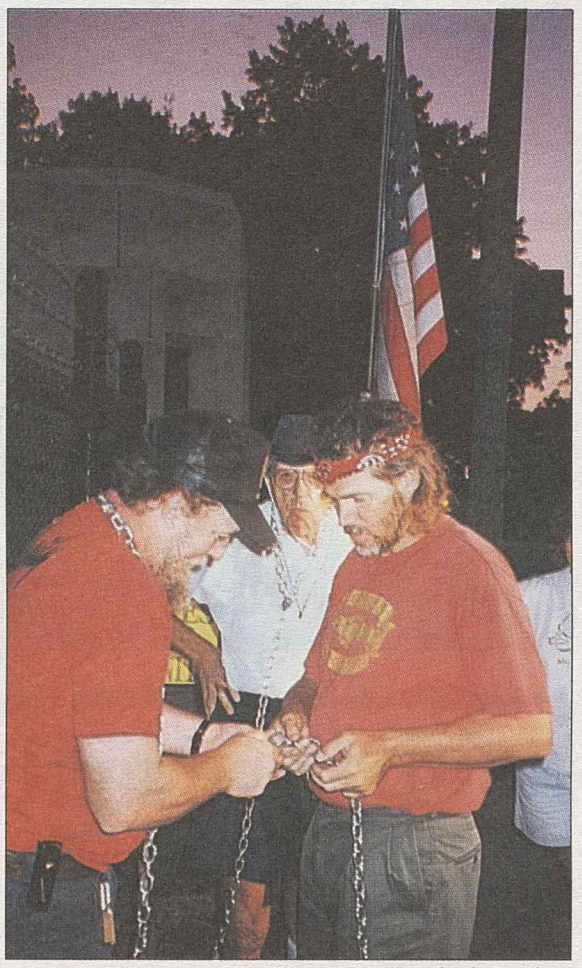


Photo by Tom Johnson

Paperworker Dan Lane (right) helps fellow Staley worker Art Dhermy as Rev. Bob Weidrich looks on.

The UPIU also is continuing its nationwide campaign of informational leafleting at Pepsi subsidiaries KFC, Pizza Hut and Taco Bell, said Doug Brooks, UPIU's special projects director. The union will pay particular attention to Pizza Hut, which also buys a solid sweetener for one of its products directly from Staley.

Some 760 UPIU members, formerly Allied Industrial Workers, were locked out on June 27, 1993.

Many of the workers and their families are suffering serious financial problems as a result of the strike. The union established an Adopt-a-Family program two years ago, through which unions or other organizations can contribute $100 to $600 a month.

The AFL-CIO has propelled the Adopt-a-Family program nationwide. The federation, affiliated unions and locals have donated at least $130,000 to help workers on strike or locked out at three Decatur, Ill., plants — Staley, Caterpillar and Bridgestone/Firestone. The UAW is providing for its members on strike at Caterpillar. The Steelworkers are providing for members, formerly Rubber Workers, who ended their strike at Bridgestone/Firestone but who still have not been recalled to work.

"We're also strongly encouraging individual donations," said Barrie Williams, who heads the program for UPIU Local 7837. "We pool those contributions to meet the $600 a month."

For more information on Adopt-a-Family, call Barrie Williams at 217/872-2209. Donations should be made payable to Adopt-a-Family Program; c/o UPIU Local 7837; 3080-B Kandy Lane; Decatur, Ill. 62526.

Teamster strike against carhauler is pinching GM

By David Kameras

Using as leverage the consumer demand that marks the beginning of a new car model year, 5,000 Teamsters walked off the job Sept. 7 at Ryder Automotive Carrier Group, Inc., upsetting the delivery of mostly General Motors Corp. and Chrysler Corp. vehicles.

The strike followed a Sept. 1 breakdown of talks aimed at securing a new national carhaul agreement between the IBT and eight major auto carriers represented by the National Automobile Transporters Labor Division. The pact would cover more than 12,000 truck drivers, dockworkers and mechanics.

The union has charged that NATLD has engaged in unfair labor practices by refusing to provide information necessary for bargaining.

"Our members deserve a good contract from an industry that has made record profits during the past two years," declared IBT President Ron Carey. Carey noted that Ryder's top executive received a 37.5 percent pay boost last year, while the carriers are seeking concessions from workers.

The pinch already is being felt as automakers stockpile their products in factory parking lots. Both Chrysler and GM dealers have reported difficulties in supplying their customers with cars, and GM has begun a "dealer driveaway" program, inviting dealers to come pick up their cars and trucks themselves.

Ryder has filed both unfair labor practice charges with the National Labor Relations Board and a damage suit in federal court, which IBT spokesman Craig Merrilees characterized as a "desperate grab at headlines to divert the attention of cranky car dealers and distraught auto executives who can't find places to park their new cars."

The previous contract expired June 21, and nine months of talks collapsed in June over economic, job security and information-sharing issues. Last spring, Teamsters authorized a strike if necessary, and in late July voted 19 to 1 to reject management's final offer.

"Ryder and the others are demanding the ability to use nonunion subsidiaries to do the work," said IBT spokesman Jeff Cappella. "They want to shift the work to lower-paid drivers who get fewer benefits and lower pensions."

Other unions involved in the nation's auto delivery network, including the Locomotive Engineers, the Longshoremen, the Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, the UAW, the United Transportation Union and the Maintenance of Way Employees, have expressed their support for the IBT. Unionized rail workers in several locations have refused to handle flatbed cars holding Ryder trailers, thereby further punching a hole in the delivery network.

"This paves the way for Teamster local leaders to build strong coalitions with unions and community groups to increase the pressure on carhaul companies to reach a fair agreement," Carey said.

PED explores advantages of labor-management cooperation

Lake Buena Vista, Fla.

Where cooperation is taking place in public workplaces, labor and management have been able to put much greater focus on service, delegates to the Public Employee Department convention were told.

Jonathan Brock, executive director of a federal task force examining the connection between government excellence and labor-management cooperation, said the panel also has found that workers are getting a better quality of work life and more respect from both management and the public in cooperative workplaces.

The PED delegates, meeting Sept. 7-8 under the theme of "Public Employees: Serving America with Pride," addressed issues affecting public employee union affiliates at the federal, state and local levels. They also re-elected PED President Al Bilik and Secretary-Treasurer John Leyden.

Bilik is a member of the Secretary of Labor's Task Force on Excellence in State and Local Government Through Labor-Management Cooperation, which also includes two other members who addressed the delegates — Arthur Hamilton, former president of the National Conference of State Legislatures, and Ken Young, former executive assistant to retired AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland.

The group, which was appointed last year, has made fact-finding trips to state, county and city sites in five regions of the country to study ways public employees and managers are working together.

AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue, who later testified before the task force **(see story, Page 2)**, praised the work of public workers. He vowed that the federation would provide "a strong, progressive voice that speaks out against government bashing, against privatization, against contracting out, against the idolatry of the market — a voice for a vigorous, well-funded, well-managed public sector that deserves and gets America's support and respect."

Also addressing the convention was John J. Sweeney, president of the Service Employees and a candidate for president of the AFL-CIO. He said his vision of a perfect labor movement is one that "constantly examines itself and corrects its own imperfections."

"Public employees will continue to be a central part of the future of the labor movement," he said. "Public-sector unions have a proud history . . . one of standing up against oppression."

The keynote was delivered by former New York Gov. Mario Cuomo. "When I started my political career, the first people to step forward were in the union movement," he said.

On the convention's opening morning, the PED paid tribute to the victims and the rescue workers who helped after the April bombing in Oklahoma City.

Bilik presented plaques honoring these valiant unionists to Jane Graham, president of AFGE Local 3138; Charles Stone, president of IAFF Local 1524; and Nelson O. Ryan, president of AFSCME Local 2406.

BARGAINING

L.A. teachers ratify pact

The United Teachers of Los Angeles overwhelmingly approved a new three-year contract that restores pay to pre-austerity levels and gives new teachers a raise.

The agreement commits the Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education to give the 31,000 teachers a 3 percent raise and maintain it for three years, if state revenues remain stable, and to provide additional raises if possible.

The raise restores veteran teachers to the wage level they lost when the district lost funds in 1991. But it represents a straightforward raise for some 8,000 new teachers and 4,000 teachers with 25 years' service and a master's degree. The new pay levels range from $29,500 to $54,700.

Financial security was a key issue for the teachers, said UTLA President Helen Bernstein. The district announced earlier that it might seek a 4 percent pay cut, but teachers voted to strike if no contract had been approved by the week of Sept. 25.

Nurses gain training fund

Registered nurses at Group Health Cooperative in Seattle ratified a new two-year contract that includes a $1,175,000 training fund.

"Our seniority system had become irrelevant" as Group Health laid off nurses, said Chris Bodin, lead negotiator for District 1199NW, a Service Employees affiliate. The new agreement allows up to 16 weeks of retraining for jobs that are on the low seniority roster, for vacancies, and for jobs that are newly created or are being expanded, the union said.

Wages and benefits for the 1,200 nurses are being negotiated separately as part of joint bargaining by eight Group Health unions.

Tultex contract ratified

UNITE! members approved a first contract with Tultex Corp. in South Boston, Va., that guarantees they will not be laid off during the term.

The three-year agreement, covering some 600 employees, is the second time workers in a Tultex unit have won a first contract, following an agreement last May that covered 2,350 workers at the Martinsville, Va., headquarters plant.

The South Boston contract gives workers a salary bonus of $250 to be paid in $50 increments beginning in October. They also gained Christmas bonuses of 2 percent of annual pay, 2.2 percent in 1996 and 2.4 percent in 1997.

The agreement also increases pension benefits, lowers health care deductibles and establishes a joint labor-management committee to study ways to improve quality and on-the-job safety as well as to lower absenteeism.

IBEW accord saves jobs

The Electrical Workers at Raytheon Co. plants in Massachusetts accepted a pay freeze for three years in exchange for a company pledge to keep most of the current operations in the state.

The new agreement between the electronics firm and IBEW Local 1505 also provides an 8.5 percent pay reduction for new hires, a temporary 8.5 percent cut for those rehired from layoff, a new managed care health plan and a buyout incentive for early retirement. The agreement covers about 4,800 workers whose average wage is $17 an hour.

Under the new agreement, the company promised to keep 80 percent of its operations in the state, said Local 1505 President Arthur Osburn. About 500 jobs are expected to be cut, Osburn said, but most could be accommodated through the buyout plan.

D.C. hotel pact ratified

Some 3,500 members of Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Local 25 preserved their benefits under a new three-year master contract with 13 major Washington hotels.

Under the new contract, the hotels will continue to pay 100 percent of the premium cost of health coverage for workers and their families. The contract also calls for wage increases of 30 cents per hour for nontipped employees, 20 cents for bus persons and 15 cents for tipped employees in each year of the contract.

A strike had been set for midnight Sept. 15, but the deadline passed with the talks continuing into the early hours of the next morning.



SEIU photo

A union member is arrested in Los Angeles after trying to tell Grancare shareholders the conditions of workers.

SEIU drive takes on Grancare

By Muriel H. Cooper

While Service Employees at a nursing home in California were celebrating a victory, unionists in Milwaukee conducted a one-day strike and workers at a Detroit facility held a "work-in" to pressure the anti-union Grancare to settle first contracts.

Their efforts are part of SEIU's "Dignity, Rights and Respect Campaign," a national organizing effort targeting nursing home workers. "Our goal is to organize 100 homes this year, and we have a good shot," said Dan Snapp, the union's nursing home organizing director.

Grancare, one of the largest nursing home chains in the country, agreed to a $307,000 settlement of unfair labor practice charges brought by SEIU Local 399 in Los Angeles. The company had sold the facility, Oakview Nursing Home, to Pleasant Care earlier this year.

The workers at Oakview, which at 353 beds is the largest nursing home in California, sought out the union in 1993 after being understaffed and verbally abused by management. "The administrator always yelled at us to work faster," said Blanca Correa, a former Oakview employee who now is an SEIU organizer.

"One night I worked by myself with about 50 patients," she said. "I remember sitting there thinking, 'what if an emergency comes up, which patient is more important?' It was very scary. That's when we started looking into organizing."

In retaliation, the company fired 30 workers, many with a decade of experience, and held captive-audience meetings. The workers led a public campaign, leafleting all major and feeder hospitals in the area and demonstrating outside the company's annual shareholders meeting, where six workers were arrested.

"I told them that we had to stay together," said Correa. "It was very important for us to hold on. The only way to make the industry change is to stick together, hold on and pray," she said.

The settlement represents 80 percent of all back pay owed to the workers, along with reimbursement of the union's legal fees. Workers who wanted jobs at other Grancare facilities were guaranteed new jobs. The Oakview home, under new management, is still nonunion.

Grancare also is playing hardball with 400 employees recently organized by SEIU Local 150 at three Milwaukee homes.

The union wants card-check authorization for recognition at Grancare's nonunion facilities and statewide master agreements, as well as clauses guaranteeing successorship and preventing subcontracting.

"We intend to fight for our main goal, which is a fair way for people to be recognized without having to go through the process of having a National Labor Relations Board election, as well as fair wages, health and pension benefits," said Local 150 Organizer Beth Levie.

Contract talks also are under way between SEIU and seven Grancare homes each in Michigan and California.

After learning of a Michigan inspection that found suburban Detroit's Cambridge Nursing Home short-staffed, members of Local 79 conducted a "work-in."

"We demanded to go in with our members — skilled nurses, aides and housekeepers — to alleviate the staffing shortage and assure quality care for the patients," said Local 79 President Paul Policicchio.

"The thing is, the administrator admitted that there is a staffing shortage, but staffing levels are established by the corporate office," he said. "We want to have contract language that enables local nursing home workers to have input through staffing counsel or committee to address local needs."

Hillhaven workers seek fair contract

Hillhaven nursing home workers in California conducted a daylong, statewide campaign in response to the company's unwillingness to reach a contract with the Service Employees at its 25 homes.

On Sept. 18, nearly 600 workers representing nine facilities went on a one-day strike and another 1,400 workers from 16 sites held informational pickets. Striking workers from Northern California converged on San Francisco for a solidarity march and rally.

"Hillhaven left us no choice but to bring public attention to the horrors that workers suffer when they go to work and as advocates for their patients," said Lisa Hubbard, an SEIU spokesperson.

The union also is considering filing new charges of unfair labor practices against Hillhaven for retaliating against some 60 employees involved in the legal strike.

"It appears based on numbers coming in that Hillhaven has singled out about 60 members who spoke to the media or took other leadership roles, so in effect they are being punished for taking a stand for conditions at Hillhaven," said Hubbard.

Hillhaven management told the workers not to return to work on Sept. 19, but instead return on Sept. 23.

Thirteen of the Hillhaven facilities are under a master contract that expired Jan. 31. The other 12 homes are under multiple contracts that expired Sept. 15.

Ninety-four percent of the workers voted to authorize a strike if an agreement was not reached by Sept. 15. "The strike authorization vote shows overwhelming support for our members' issues with Hillhaven," said Michael Perri, the union's nursing home coordinator.

"This isn't about wages and benefits. This is about Hillhaven's patient care record and the dignity, rights and respect of workers and patients," he said.

— Muriel H. Cooper

UNION NEWS

Wellstone draws praise

Bloomington, Minn.

Delegates to the Minnesota AFL-CIO convention used the occasion to unanimously endorse Democratic Sen. Paul Wellstone for re-election in 1996. "No U.S. senator has demonstrated concern for working families more consistently and courageously," said state AFL-CIO President Bernard Brommer.

Underlining the importance of political action, AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue predicted that if President Clinton is defeated next year and Congress remains in GOP hands, "every social program enacted in the last century will be gone by 2000."

The convention unanimously re-elected Brommer and Secretary-Treasurer Bill Peterson to their posts.

Delegates also heard from four nurses striking a small nursing home in Walker, Minn., as well as UPIU Local 7837 representative Mike Griffin, who briefed them on the lockout at A.E. Staley Co. in Decatur, Ill. They responded by raising $9,000 for the workers at both sites.

Delegates received video greetings from John J. Sweeney, Richard L. Trumka and Linda Chavez-Thompson, candidates for AFL-CIO executive offices.

Florida elects Hill

Miami Beach, Fla.

State legislative issues and a visit from AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue topped the agenda at the Florida AFL-CIO convention in early September.

The 225 delegates passed resolutions dealing with utilities deregulation, the U.S. sugar-pricing policy, public employees and privatization of state services, along with those supporting affirmative action and immigrant rights.

Anthony C. Hill was formally elected to serve as secretary-treasurer; he had filled a vacated seat. All executive board members were unanimously re-elected. President Marilyn Lenard's term will expire in two years.

Donahue pledged to be outspoken in defense of labor, saying, "When myths are spread, I want to fight them with facts. I invite you to join me."

Other speakers included Communications Workers President Morton Bahr, Electronic Workers President William H. Bywater and AFSCME Secretary-Treasurer William Lucy.

S.C. raises per capita

Myrtle Beach, S.C.

Delegates to South Carolina's annual AFL-CIO convention were asked for a nickel increase in per capita — and gave a dime instead.

The 150 delegates also extended warm recognition and gratitude to native son Lane Kirkland, honoring the second president of the AFL-CIO by naming its three $500 yearly scholarships for him.

President G.O. Smoak and Secretary-Treasurer Jerry McDaniel were re-elected by acclamation. James Sanderson from the Steelworkers was elected to vice president to replace James Hornsby, who retired.

In other action, the convention reduced executive board meetings from four a year to two and reduced the trustees' audit from two a year to one.

Speakers included Don Fowler from the Democratic National Committee, the former state Democratic chairman.

Nevada boosts training

Las Vegas

Delegates to the Nevada AFL-CIO convention re-elected four vice presidents and passed a number of resolutions supporting job training efforts.

Re-elected to three-year terms were Frank Caine, Joe Kay, Dan Rusnak and Siemon Ostrander. The top two officers, Executive Secretary-Treasurer Claude "Blackie" Evans and President Walt Elliot, and eight vice presidents are not up for re-election until 1996.

Among the resolutions were those supporting the Human Resources Development Institute, the Rocky Mountain Labor School, Job Training Partnership Act and the Jim Arnold scholarship fund, as well as one commending former AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland for his years of service to the labor movement.

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling paid tribute to the 550 Frontier Hotel and Casino workers who marked their fourth anniversary on strike. "Solidarity sees a struggle by a single union member as a struggle for all union members," she said.

Other speakers included AFSCME Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson and Nevada Gov. Bob Miller.



Jocelyn Sherman/UFW

Farm Workers rally after a "March for Justice" through the Salinas Valley along California's central coast.

UFW march renews organizing

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

More than 7,000 Farm Workers, union leaders and community activists poured through the streets of Salinas, Calif., Sept. 17 in a "March for Justice."

The march commemorated the 25th anniversary of the first strike led by UFW co-founder Cesar Chavez and refortified the union's efforts to organize along the central coast.

Marching along the three-mile route, the demonstrators waved the union's red flag with black eagles and chanted, "the people, united, will never be defeated."

In a rally that followed the march, UFW President Arturo Rodriguez recalled the valor of the Delano strikers, who "inspired thousands of workers and gave life to the UFW. It still continues today."

Service Employees President John J. Sweeney, a candidate for president of the AFL-CIO, told the marchers, "Your movement is a shining example of how a union can move a nation."

Other marchers included UFW co-founder Delores Huerta; Cesar Chavez's widow, Helen; Salinas City Councilman Fernando Armenta; and Walter Johnson, president of the San Francisco AFL-CIO.

In a document titled "Growers, Gains and Farm Workers' Losses, 25 Years After the Salinas Valley Lettuce Strike," distributed during the march, the union argued that farm workers are in many ways worse off than they were when the 1970 strike began.

According to the document, U.S. per capita vegetable consumption, retail prices for produce and agricultural productivity all rose during the late 1980s and early 1990s. But real wages have fallen, from $7,700 in 1970 to $6,900 today, Rodriguez said.

The campaign is targeting Bruce Church and its affiliated companies, including Fresh Express markets, the union said.

The Salinas Valley farm worker walkouts also led to the passage of the 1975 Agricultural Labor Relations Act that guarantees farm workers the rights to organize, vote in state-supervised secret-ballot elections and bargain with their employers for union contracts.

But the law has not been enforced, agricultural corporations have gained control of the market and workers' gains have been eroded, Rodriguez said. The UFW's aggressive new initiatives, which have resulted in organizing wins and contracts for thousands of workers, will rebuild worker power, he said.

Sixteen months ago, the union started a field organizing and contract drive in California's fruit and vegetable industries. Since then, the UFW has won 12 consecutive elections and signed more than two dozen contracts with growers — five of which have been with Salinas Valley growers.

Monterey Mushrooms, California's largest mushroom producer, is the latest grower to sign a contract with the union. The contract covers more than 450 workers in San Jose.

The contract comes just five months after 302 out of 394 workers cast ballots for the UFW in an April 4 secret-ballot election supervised by the state Agricultural Labor Relations Board.

The UFW worked even faster to organize and gain a contract for more than 400 Salinas, Calif., strawberry workers in just two days after the workers had walked out over low wages and sexual harassment.

The day after the walk-out at VCNM Farms, the workers filed for an election. The next day, on Aug. 17, VCNM workers voted 332-50 for UFW representation and went back to work with pay raises and incentive pay.

VCNM also fired five supervisors who pickers said had been responsible for poor treatment, including sexual harassment of workers.

Seasonal strawberry workers earning $4 an hour won an immediate 50-cent pay increase to $4.50 per hour. They also are slated to receive incentive pay of 70 cents per box. Regular hourly workers won an immediate $1-an-hour increase, to $8 per hour.

ALPA turns to self-help against FedEx

Fifteen months of efforts by the Air Line Pilots to secure a contract at Federal Express have foundered, prompting the union to request from the National Mediation Board a release from mediation.

If granted, the release would begin a process that could ultimately result in a strike at the package carrier.

Two weeks of sequestered talks in Cincinnati and Washington failed to bring an agreement closer, prompting ALPA President J. Randolph Babbitt to request from the NMB a formal proffer of arbitration. "To date, these meetings have been singularly unsuccessful, with Federal Express unwilling to negotiate in a manner which could reasonably be expected to lead to an agreement," he said.

"FedEx pilots and their families are clearly frustrated by the company's actions, and we are preparing for the possible release to legal self-help activities," said Al Samford, chairman of ALPA New York Council 99. "We helped build this company into the profitable business that it is, and we have earned the right to share in the rewards of our hard work."

FedEx pilots, who haven't seen a pay raise in seven years, want a pact that will provide industry-standard retirement and job security, items especially needed as the carrier pursues an aggressive global expansion.

"Management is pushing pilots to the extreme, asking them to work on their days off and during vacations to keep the operation going because they have not hired and trained sufficient numbers of pilots to handle our high package volume — and yet, at a time of record profits, they are asking us for concessions at the bargaining table. That's absurd," said Joseph DePete, chairman of ALPA's Master Executive Council at FedEx.

"What most people don't realize is that unlike heavyweight freight carriers or passenger carriers, it takes only a small percentage of frustrated pilots to undermine FedEx's reliability and completely disrupt the service systemwide," DePete said. "And many pilots are telling us that their patience is reaching the breaking point."

— David Kameras

UNION NEWS

Brown shoe runs off

The Brown Group will close its five remaining U.S. shoe factories, displacing about 2,460 workers represented by the Food and Commercial Workers.

Negotiations for severance pay, outplacement assistance and other concerns are under way, the union said. Mid-November is the target date for the factory closings.

The company said merchandise turned out by its domestic plants cannot compete with the products it manufactures overseas. The group will close two plants in Tennessee, one in Arkansas and two in Missouri.

Brown, which operates the Famous Footwear chain of 804 shoe outlets, makes such brands as Naturalizer, Air Step Life Stride, Dr. Scholl's and the children's Buster Brown line.

BET votes union again

For the second time in two years, employees of Black Entertainment Television voted to be represented by Electrical Workers Local 1200.

The workers, who include tape editors and studio and film camera operators, have lower wages than others in the same position in the Washington broadcast industry, irregular and sporadic work schedules and unlimited job suspensions.

Employees began an organizing drive in 1993, which led to the successful selection of IBEW as their representative. The union began negotiations with BET but there was no movement toward a contract by management.

BET is currently on the AFL-CIO boycott list. The union is asking that cable companies discontinue their agreements with BET.

Many due pension benefits

The Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation will serve as a clearinghouse to locate missing workers due pension benefits under a new regulation.

"This new program will be a boon for people who are owed pensions but may not know it," said Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich.

Starting in early 1996, the new program would extend the agency's search efforts to people missing from fully funded plans that have been terminated. More than 4,000 fully funded plans end each year.

UFCW explores diversity

The Food and Commercial Workers examined the dual objectives of organizing and representing a diverse work force in the union's first-ever seminar on the subject.

"The status quo is unacceptable," declared UFCW Vice President Joe Hansen, director of the union's Food Processing, Packing and Manufacturing Division. "Many immigrants are taking low-wage jobs here and are being exploited. We must overcome challenges presented by language and cultural differences and work toward the common goals we share."

Other participants included UFCW activists, shop stewards, international vice presidents, local union officers and international representatives.

AFGE local blasts VOA

Government Employees Local 1812 held a demonstration at the Voice of America building Aug. 31 in Washington, to call attention to abusive practices at the VOA China Branch.

Fei Wang, an international radio broadcaster at the VOA China Branch, was only expressing his sympathy on a computer bulletin board for a colleague who complained of alleged unfair treatment, said AFGE Local 1812 President Stacey Rose-Blass. But management improperly translated the message, accused Wang of contemplating and advocating violence and put him on administrative leave.

There was no due process, no union representation and no investigation, Rose-Blass told demonstrators. Management finally reinstated Wang but leveled another charge that he used government property for outside employment and recommended that he be terminated.

The union said similar management abuses have been systematically occurring in other VOA services, including VOA Farsi, Pashto and African Services, as well as the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (Radio and TV Marti).



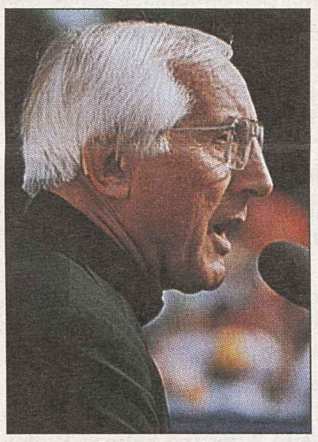
Photos by Daymon J. Hartley/The Detroit Journal

Michael Moore, producer of Fox Television's TV Nation, and "Crackers, The Corporate Crime Fighting Chicken," talk to striking Detroit newspaper workers after confronting management on their show.

Justice probe forces newspaper's retreat

Continued from Page 1

"That's the key moral issue here: the right of people to organize as a union . . . and the company trying to destroy that right," Gumbleton said. "The violence being done to these people by a company depriving them of jobs is far in excess of what's being done by police at this picket line," he said.



Bishop Gumbleton

Gumbleton, along with other religious leaders, held a press conference outside the church of News publisher Robert H. Giles to refute an editorial that criticized religious leaders who opposed the use of scabs.

The newspapers are so desperate in their public relations war that they sought to demonize the strikers by using security guards to burn up one of their own trucks, and then blamed it on strikers. Striking Newspaper Guild member Kate Desmet, a veteran Detroit News religion writer, said she was standing near the gate of the Sterling Heights plant as delivery trucks stormed out just before midnight Sept. 5. As soon as the last truck pulled out, Desmet said, a group of scab workers moved a truck near the gate as if to block it.

"I saw these goon guards standing next to the truck, and the next thing I saw was this flame go up. Nothing was thrown in there to start a fire — no firecrackers, no incendiary device, no sound of breaking glass. The truck just started burning."

"It was eerie. There was no panic, no rushing around, no attempt to put it out. It was like they were standing around a big camp fire. It was nothing like a normal fire scene.

"It was then I thought, 'Oh, my god! They're setting their own truck on fire!'" Desmet and several other strikers backed away, fearing the truck's gasoline tanks would explode.

Desmet, whose eyewitness account was carried on a local TV news show, said she was angry when the company tried to blame picketers for the blaze. "That's what they want — to pin it on us," she said bitterly. "But I know what I saw."

The company goons attacked peaceful demonstrators outside the plant Sept. 10 when trucks inside the plant drove into a crowd of about 300 picketers. They had remained outside the front gate after a 10-hour standoff in which some 2,000 strikers refused to let anything in or out of the plant. During the standoff, the company used helicopters to fly out its crucial Sunday edition.

It was a miracle no one was killed when the six trucks plowed into the crowd, said striker John Lippert, a Free Press reporter. "It was a stunning example of corporate lawlessness," Lippert said in the strike paper, the Detroit Journal. "Whoever gave the order knew full well people may be injured or killed, and it was ordered anyway. These are really lawless companies, and their disregard for human life and safety is getting brazen."

Gumbleton also was instrumental in negotiating with the strikebreaking guards to prevent violence at the Sterling Heights printing plant. "The fact that they waited until 4 in the morning shows he had some effect," Perpena said.

In addition to the outpouring of members of the UAW, which is headquartered in Detroit, other unions involved in the picketing include AFT, Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees, Carpenters, Iron Workers and Steelworkers. The UAW also has been involved in distributing copies of union-produced newspapers throughout Michigan.

Much of the strike activity has revolved around the Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO, which has put their "bodies, heart and soul" into the struggle, as well as their organizing skills and office space, said Perpena.

The Justice Department's investigation into antitrust violations by the News and Free Press was the catalyst for the two papers to start publishing separate editions, said AFL-CIO organizer George Curtin, one of eight federation staff assigned to the strike.

"That's good for us," he said. "It's much more complicated and complex for them to put out two editions."

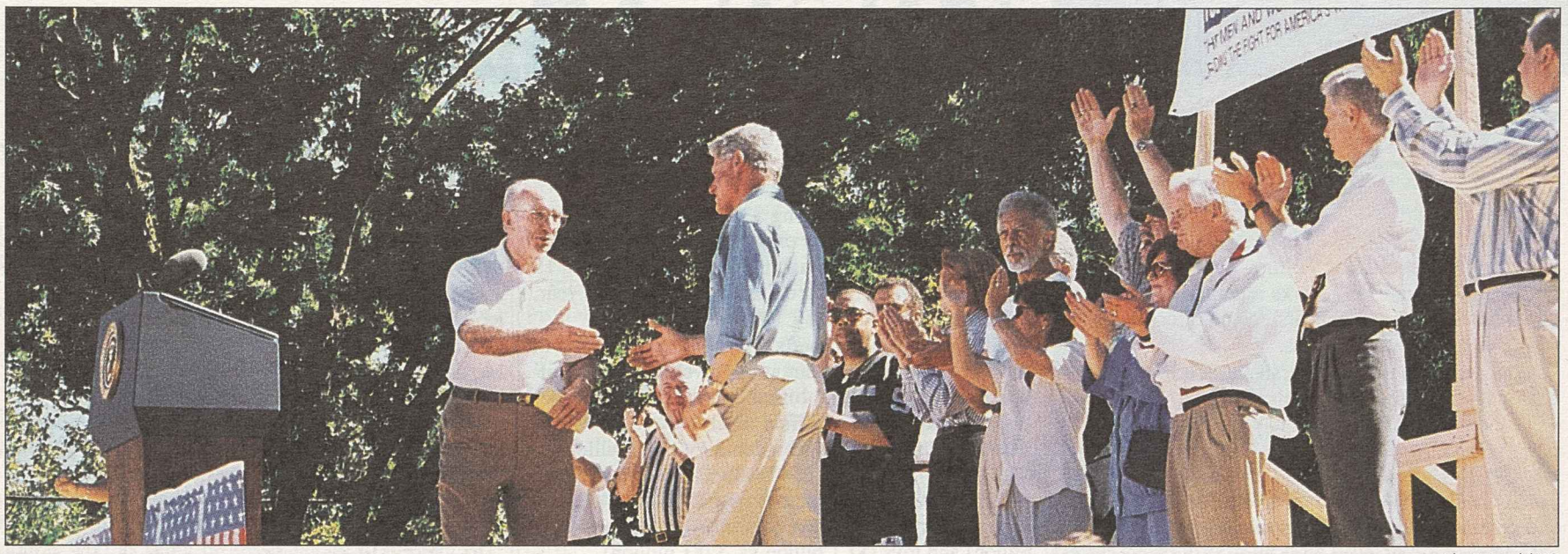
Responding to a petition from the AFL-CIO, Justice is actively investigating whether the DNA violated its joint operating agreement by publishing the joint editions of the paper without prior approval from the attorney general. That, the unions contend, nullified its antitrust exemption under the JOA and it became a price-fixing cartel.

The companies secretly filed an amendment to the original JOA in 1992, just before union contracts expired. The amendment included a contingency plan to publish daily papers jointly in case of a strike. They were already allowed to publish a joint Sunday edition. The AFL-CIO pointed out that the amendment, however, was never submitted to the attorney general for approval, as required under the law.

The national AFL-CIO campaign against advertisers who continue to place ads in the Detroit newspapers is continuing. One of the targeted advertisers, Home Depot, has dropped out of the papers, but another, Kmart, was added to the list.

The 2,600 employees of the News and Free Press walked out July 13 after negotiations failed to produce a new agreement. Management and imported scabs from other papers are producing the Free Press and News. Hired union-busting security guards are delivering the papers, as well as harassing pickets.

The AFL-CIO Community Service Department has started an adopt-a-striking-family program called the DNA Striker Relief Fund. The fund will be administered by the Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO. Donations should be made payable to and sent to DNA Striker Relief Fund, Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO, 2550 West Grand Blvd., Detroit, Mich. 48208.



John M. Ravnik/TNG

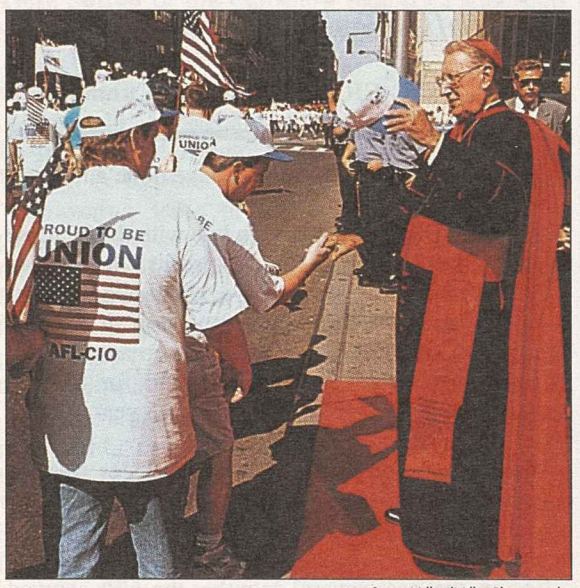
AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue welcomes President Clinton to the podium at the Alameda County AFL-CIO picnic in Pleasanton, Calif., near Oakland.

Labor's Day 1995

Organized labor took every opportunity to promote the value of unions to American life during a variety of events over the 1995 Labor Day weekend.

Workers paraded through the streets of New York, Detroit, Chicago and other major cities and enjoyed the spotlight when politicians came to call at picnics and breakfasts across the country. AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue took the lead on radio and television news coverage of workers and their unions.

The cries for justice rang out from a number of American communities — from Detroit, where workers are seeking a fair contract with the city's two newspapers, to Nashville, Tenn., where union-busting multinational Bridgestone/Firestone has its U.S. headquarters, to Decatur, Ill., where Paperworkers chained themselves to the fence of A.E. Staley, which locked out the workers two years ago when they would not agree to massive concessions.



Steve Miller/Miller Photography

Cardinal John O'Connor joins in the festivities with participants at the New York Labor Day Parade.



Milwaukee Labor Advocate

UFCW Local 1444 President Dan Welch speaks from the Milwaukee Workers Memorial gazebo, which has railings made of old and newfangled tools, gears and machine parts.

Milwaukee unveils memorial

Wisconsin workers have a solid example of their value to the people of the Badger State — a memorial to workers killed or injured on the job, dedicated on Labor Day.

The memorial, in Zeidler Union Square Park in downtown Milwaukee, was designed by Terese Agnew and Mary Zebell to educate and inspire visitors about worker rights, job safety and health and the struggles and triumphs of the past. It was built under the auspices of the Wisconsin State AFL-CIO, the Milwaukee County Labor Council AFL-CIO and the Wisconsin Labor History Society.

The $300,000 project took several years to complete — from the planning stages through more than a year of construction. But the memorial was well worth it, said Wisconsin AFL-CIO President David Newby, who calls the memorial an "architectural masterpiece."

It includes a metal gazebo that holds a clock that tells time in a unique way — instead of moving hands, the clock's face rotates, illustrating the passage of time in the history of workers and their crafts. The gazebo's railings are made of old tools, gears and machine parts.

The park's chain-link fences feature labor messages forged into the links and held up by posts with labor history facts printed on them.

Milwaukee-area companies played a major role in bringing the project along, donating money, time and parts to the memorial and doing some of the work, while many Wisconsin trade unionists donated their expertise.

Members of the Iron Workers, Sheet Metal Workers, Paperworkers, Operating Engineers, Steelworkers, Painters, Electrical Workers and others participated Aug. 19 in putting all the pieces together in time for the Sept. 4 dedication.

— Colleen M. O'Neill





USWA photos

Steelworkers took their campaign against Bridgestone/Firestone from Nashville to Tokyo, where a Mother Jones marionette helped marchers make their point.

ECONOMY

Widening trade gulf is swamping workers

By David Kameras

The U.S. merchandise trade deficit in July surpassed June's record $14.9 billion by scoring a whopping $17.6 billion. This marks a dramatic worsening in a year that already appears destined for the Guinness Book of World Records.

"The record merchandise trade deficit in July demonstrates the inadequacy of this nation's trade policies — and the folly of relying solely on export growth to bring greater balance to America's external accounts," said Mark Anderson, director of the AFL-CIO Task Force on Trade. "These deficits mean more lost jobs and continued downward pressure on wages."

Leading the way was a huge jump in the goods trade deficit with Western Europe, which catapulted from $1.6 billion to $3.2 billion.

While Japanese automakers have sought to dilute criticism over their staggering trade surplus by setting up plants in America, these transplants average only 63 percent domestic content, compared with 81 percent for other foreign-owned operations and over 90 percent for U.S.-owned assembly lines. Despite the recently negotiated bilateral agreement on vehicles and auto parts, the U.S. trade deficit in auto parts is expected to reach $14.2 billion this year — up from $9.6 billion in 1990.

The trade deficit in goods with Japan improved slightly, from $5.3 billion to $5.1 billion. But the gap with China, which is now second only to Japan as a deficit leader, widened from $3 billion to $3.3 billion.

It is projected that China will achieve $163 billion in exports this year, a 35 percent increase over 1994. Eastman Kodak is investing $3.5 million in a wholly-owned venture in the export-processing zone of Pudong, China. The plant is expected to export 15 million electronic circuit chips for cameras each year, valued at $40 million, by 1998.

The ratio of July imports also outranked exports in such key industries as automotive vehicles ($8.6 billion in imports vs. $3.4 billion in exports), data processing equipment and office machinery ($5.1 billion vs. $2.8 billion), electrical machinery ($6.4 billion vs. $4.2 billion), furniture ($608 million vs. $208 million), iron and steel mill products ($1.1 billion vs. $458 million), telecommunications equipment ($3 billion vs. $1.6 billion) and toys ($1.1 billion vs. $281 million).

The merchandise trade deficit with Mexico improved somewhat, as a recession caused by a 50 percent devaluation of the peso and the loss of 1 million jobs priced goods beyond the reach of its citizens. However, the cumulative deficit since Jan. 1 was $9 billion, compared with a $1.7 billion *surplus* a year earlier.

The worsening economic situation in Mexico "should be a cautionary tale for all of us," said Anderson. "It suggests that so-called free trade agreements are not a panacea for our problems. A deepening and widening of the negotiation agenda is needed, and issues such as capital markets and, most importantly, worker rights and standards, must be dealt with directly."

AFL-CIO economist Greg Woodhead predicted that with Mexican inflation at 50 percent and U.S. inflation at 3 percent, "the current rate of currency exchange cannot and will not stand."

The International Monetary Fund recently reported that the flight of Mexican — not foreign — capital accounted for most of the $6.6 billion drop in Mexico's foreign reserves during the financial collapse of last December. "You will know when investing in Mexico is a good deal: when Mexican money goes back to Mexico," Woodhead said.

Industry groups and government agencies in Mexico are taking advantage of the situation by seeking to weaken the country's labor laws and by demanding concessions from unions, many of which have close ties to the ruling party.

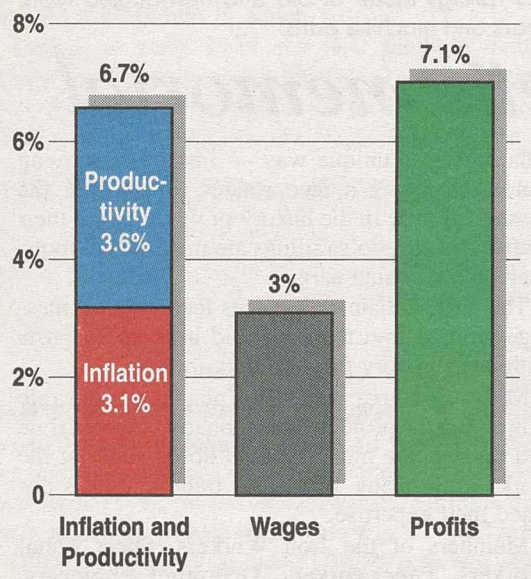
The difficulty facing Mexican workers who seek to form independent unions was highlighted at a two-day seminar in Mexico City involving the signatory countries to the North American Free Trade Agreement. The meeting was prompted by complaints that Mexico had failed to enforce its own laws when workers in a Mexican Sony plant were fired in 1994 after trying to organize.

When asked whether dissatisfied workers at a workplace can organize a second union, the Mexican delegation provided conflicting responses, one member saying it was "quite possible," another calling it illegal duplication.

"This is the first time that the issue of liberty of association has been discussed publicly in Mexico," said Arturo Alcade, a member of the National Association of Democratic Lawyers, one of the complainants in the Sony case. "Maybe this will help to prevent abuses and law violations in the future."

DATA

Wages lag far behind prices and productivity



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

For the 12 months ending June 1995, increases in wages did not keep pace with the cost of living. Meanwhile, employers turned worker productivity gains into corporate profits, which rose at a rate exceeding that of inflation and productivity combined.

Real Earnings	
August	-0.9 percent
From Aug. '94	-0.1 percent
Since 1979	-11.9 percent
Consumer Prices (CPI-W)	
August	+0.2 percent
Aug. '94-Aug. '95	+2.5 percent
Producer Prices (Finished Goods)	
August	-0.1 percent
July	Unchanged
Merchandise Trade Deficit	
July	$17.6 billion
June	$14.9 billion

AFL-CIO NEWSGRAFIC

Earnings lag behind other indicators

U.S. competitiveness is achieved at cost to workers

By David Kameras

The United States has for the second straight year been ranked as having the most competitive economy in the world. If there is a "competitive advantage," however, it has escaped American workers.

A Swiss survey that assesses factors that affect a country's competitiveness gave the United States its top score for domestic economic strength, internationalization and management. The currently weakened dollar may contribute to U.S. attractiveness as an investment haven, but it also is achieved at the cost of decent wages, job security and other worker protections that are taken for granted elsewhere in the industrialized world.

German workers, for example, are seeing wage increases averaging 4.5 percent, despite an inflation rate of 2 percent. Yet economists predict that country's gross domestic product will grow by up to 4 percent into next year, compared with 1.5 percent to 2.5 percent in the United States. Labor costs in Germany average $27.31 an hour; in the United States, it's $17.10.

"Millions of white-collar supervisors and mid-level managers are joining blue-collar production workers in a common category: frayed-collar workers — frayed-collar workers in gold-plated times," said Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich.

With wages idling in neutral, it is not surprising that Americans must work longer even as they slip behind. The U.S. workweek, including part time, increased from 38.3 to 39.5 from 1983 to 1993. That compares with the average German workweek, which dropped from 32.7 to 30.6 hours.

In France, the workweek dropped from 33 to 32.2 hours, and in Great Britain, from 32.4 to 32.1 hours. In average number of paid holiday and vacation days off, Germans have 42, the French 35, British 31 and Americans 23.

Meanwhile, productivity in the second quarter was up 3.6 percent from the same period a year ago, but real hourly compensation rose only 0.5 percent. Durable-goods manufacturing, which enjoyed a 3.4 percent productivity increase, saw real compensation actually decline 0.8 percent.

"With the increase in productivity over the last year, corporations had four choices," said AFL-CIO economist Bill Cunningham. "They could have given workers a raise; they could have lowered prices, which would have given workers an effective pay raise by lowering their cost of living, while making products more competitive; or they could have done a mixture of the two.

> *"Corporations . . . raised prices in line with the increase in productivity and pocketed the profits."*
>
> **—AFL-CIO economist Bill Cunningham**

"Instead, they raised prices in line with the increase in productivity and pocketed the profits," he said.

Underlining that trend, real weekly earnings plummeted a seasonally adjusted 0.9 percent in August, more than offsetting a 0.8 percent increase in July. Real earnings were down 0.1 percent for the 12-month period, and 11.9 percent from 15 years before that.

Wage stagnation rather than rising prices was the culprit. In fact, the consumer price index (CPI-W) was up only 0.1 percent in August, and 2.5 percent higher than a year ago.

"As in the past several months, the CPI showed little evidence of inflation," reported AFL-CIO economist Anne Draper.

Price increases were recorded in medical care (0.5 percent), other goods and services, such as tobacco products, personal care and educational expenses (0.5 percent), entertainment (0.4 percent), food and beverages (0.3 percent), housing (0.3 percent) and apparel and upkeep (0.3 percent). Transportation prices fell 0.6 percent. Prices for new vehicles were up 0.1 percent, while down 0.7 percent for used cars, still 9.1 percent ahead of a year ago. Gasoline was down a sharp 3 percent, and gas and electric charges jumped 1.1 percent.

Finished goods prices, a predictor of future consumer prices, "averaged a 0.1 percent decline in August, continuing the nearly motionless pattern of the last several months," said Rudy Oswald, AFL-CIO director of economic research. "Energy price drops, combined with zero food price increases, helped the outcome.

"But even without food and energy, the price advance was a modest 0.1 percent — down from 0.2 percent in July and down from all other months since February," he said.

Models fashion a new union

By Muriel H. Cooper

They are beautiful, fashionable and strong supporters of their union.

Forty-four models recently formed The Models Guild, chartered under Office and Professional Employees Local 51.

"This is the birth of an entire new labor organization," said Jay Porcaro, OPEIU's organizing director. "The models came to OPEIU because we represent white-collar professional expertise."

Since its August charter, more than 400 models from all over the country have expressed interest in joining the union.

"Over the years, I have become more and more convinced that fashion models need an organization like The Models Guild, which can offer them protection as well as bring professionalism to the industry itself," said former model and Guild founder Amie Bongay.

The Guild wants to bring benefits, protection against discrimination, workplace safety, industry standards, training and dignity to models across the country.

"It's time we take our places in the career work force," said model Beverly Johnson. "We are at the beginning of a major historical event."

Johnson and models Tara Shannon and Donna Eller described the realities of the alleged "glamorous life" to OPEIU President Michael Goodwin.

Eller said there are no provisions for medical or life insurance, pensions or safety protections. "People think it's only a job for us for a few years, but many of us work in it for many years," said Eller, who has 10 years in the industry.

Photo shoots are often dangerous, said Porcaro. Yet the models don't have workers' compensation or safety and health protections. "Now the union can see that they are protected. The models have the same needs as any workers, any professionals," said Porcaro.

As a result of joining OPEIU, the models will have access to several Union Privilege benefits, including a low-interest rate MasterCard, various loan programs, discounted legal services, prescription drugs and store products.



OPEIU photo

Models Beverly Johnson and Tara Shannon flank Office and Professional Employees International Union President Michael Goodwin as he presents a local union charter to The Models Guild. The new unionists described work that is often dangerous and lacks benefits.

NEWSMAKERS

Charles L. Little has assumed the office of president of the United Transportation Union, effective Sept. 6, with the retirement of **G. Thomas DuBose**. Little was elected to the position by delegates at the UTU convention in July. Also assuming positions within the union are **Byron A. Boyd Jr.**, replacing retiring Assistant President **Lloyd W. Swert,** and Secretary-Treasurer **Roger D. Griffeth**, who is replacing Little.

Ray Benning has been named director of the Airline Division for the Teamsters. He replaces **Marv Griswold,** who is retiring from the post after 37 years in the industry. Benning began his career as a mechanic at Western Airlines.

Carpenters Local 210 members **Aaron Sojourner** and **Matthew Capece**, along with Yale University student **Nick Allen**, are producing "Working in America," a new monthly radio show on WPKN-FM in Norwalk, Conn., that focuses on workplace issues. **Tony Sutton** of the Carpentry Industry Partnership will host the show.

AWARDS

National Labor Relations Board Chairman **William B. Gould** paid tribute to former UAW President **Walter P. Reuther** as a "rare individual" with an "unwavering sense of justice and fairness that is possessed by our great leaders." Gould made his remarks during the 25th Commemorative Tribute to Reuther, who died in a plane crash in 1970. UAW President **Stephen P. Yokich** described Reuther as a person whose "vision, compassion and idealism continue to inspire the men and women of the UAW."

Citing "a lifetime of dedicated service to the labor movement," the American Labor Museum and Rutgers University honored Electronic Workers President **William H. Bywater** at ceremonies opening a new exhibit on the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Congress of Industrial Organizations.

Arthur J. Goldberg, the longtime CIO counsel who was President Kennedy's first labor secretary, will become the 19th person to be honored in the Labor Department's Labor Hall of Fame.

The Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee has named two unionists as members of the Community Leadership Class of 1996 in Tennessee. **Maxine Miller**, director of labor participation for United Way, and **Sylvia Woods**, secretary for the Knoxville-Oak Ridge Central Labor Council, were selected for their demonstrated community commitment and work with agencies and programs in their communities.

The Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, Xerox Corp. and **CBS Inc.** are among the companies and organizations honored by the Labor Department for their "outstanding" affirmative action efforts. Xerox will receive the Opportunity 2000 award for its "innovative, multifaceted" program. The Leadership Conference will receive the Exemplary Public Interest Contribution award for helping women and minorities gain equal opportunity while giving federal contractors referrals to help meet employment needs. CBS will receive the Exemplary Voluntary Efforts award for increasing job opportunities for women, minorities, veterans and the physically challenged.



CWA photo

Some 10,000 Communications Workers rallied in Philadelphia's JFK Plaza Sept. 16, then marched to Bell Atlantic headquarters to let CEO Raymond Smith know they will continue to mobilize until they have an agreement. The sticking points of the negotiations have been job security, wages and retiree health care benefits. "If the Information Superhighway is going to be built through the Middle Atlantic states," said CWA President Morton Bahr, "it's going to be built by union members working for union wages and good union benefits." AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling, a former CWA officer, assured the workers that the federation "will stand with you until you achieve the fairness and dignity you deserve."

RESOURCES

CONFERENCE

Cornell University and the National Labor Relations Board will commemorate the **60th Anniversary of the Wagner Act and the NLRB** Oct. 5-6 at the Capitol Hilton in Washington. For more information, call 703/370-6329.

CONVENTION

The 1995 constitutional convention of the **International Labor Communications Association** convenes Oct. 20-21 at the Sheraton New York Hotel and Towers, New York, N.Y. Registration is $170 for each local union participant and $195 for others. The registration deadline is Oct. 3. Contact Judy Robbins or Nelly Winkler at ILCA, 202/537-5068.

BENEFIT

A swing dance to benefit the Child Labor Coalition will be held Nov. 5, 1995, at the Cherry Hill Park Conference Center, 9800 Cherry Hill Road, College Park, Md. Contact Marcie Stickle at 301/585-3817.

PUBLICATIONS

Government Lockout Awaits You! A Handbook for AFGE Members, published by the Government Employees, is intended to prepare union leaders for a potential government shutdown. Contact AFGE, 80 F St. N.W., Washington, D.C., 20001; or call 202/639-6419.

The Big Lie . . . And the Truth About Right to Work is a pocket-sized grass-roots guide on right to work in question and answer format. Contact the AFL-CIO, Reproductions and Mailing Division, 815 16th St. N.W., Room 209, Washington, D.C., 20006.

The Information Superhighway: What it Means for Working Families, a joint project of the Communications Workers and The Newspaper Guild, is a 20-page booklet that explains what the "information superhighway" is and is not. For single copies send a self-addressed mailing label to CWA Education Department, 501 3rd St. N.W., Washington, D.C., 20001.

Summary of the Seventh National Labor-Management Conference is a summary of 28 case studies presented at the 1994 National Labor-Management Conference of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. It also includes information on reinventing the workplace and the evolution of the roles of labor and management in problem solving. Copies are $4 each from the State and Local Government Labor-Management Committee, 815 16th St. N.W., Suite 308, Washington, D.C., 20006.

Conducting Local Union Officer Elections — A Guide for Election Officials, published by the U.S. Department of Labor, helps unions plan and conduct officer elections in accordance with the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act. Copies are $6 each. To order, indicate stock number 029-014-00250-0, and send check, VISA or MasterCard number and expiration date to the Superintendent of Documents, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, Pa., 15250-7954; or call 202/512-1800.

Retailers slip sweatshop blame

By Muriel H. Cooper

While lauding Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich for his retailer summit in the aftermath of an August raid of a California sweatshop, UNITE! pointed out that retailers continue to evade responsibility for conditions in which their products and profits are made.

"The retailers claim they are not responsible," said UNITE! President Jay Mazur. "The truth is that retailers control the apparel industry, indirectly through setting the price structure, and directly by control of production of their own private label products.

"By producing private labels, retailers play exactly the same role as manufacturers — they set specifications for product, they oversee quality control, even sending their own agents into the factory, and they determine which contractors produce their garments," he said.

The union placed advertisements in *The New York Times* and *Women's Wear Daily*, calling for an industrywide "Partnership for Responsibility," which includes:

- Retailers and manufacturers taking responsibility for the conditions under which their products are made, and not selling clothing made under sweatshop conditions.
- Increasing enforcement by federal and state labor departments.
- Ensuring that basic labor standards and codes of conduct are enacted overseas by retailers and manufacturers.
- Allowing undocumented immigrants to assert their rights and report abuses.
- Consumer refusal to buy goods produced under sweatshop conditions.

"Today's sweatshop is due to the globalization of the apparel industry," said Mazur. "Everyone bears responsibility for it."

However, retailers are trying to shift the enforcement responsibility to the DoL. "Their demand for DoL to 'increase enforcement of wage-and-hour laws' is hypocritical coming from major cheerleaders for the Republican majority's budget onslaught," said Mazur.

"The Department of Labor lost 23 percent of its enforcement agents during the Reagan-Bush years; today congressional Republicans call for additional cuts."

The Sept. 12 summit in New York City grew out of the discovery of 70 Thai workers held against their will and subjected to oppressive work schedules and low wages in "virtual slavery" at an El Monte, Calif., garment plant.

The workers were manufacturing items being sold at major department stores across the country.

AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue and Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling met with the workers, including one who was not allowed out of the compound for four years.

"He was allowed to write letters home, but the letters had to be censored before they were mailed," Donahue said. "This is not exploitation, this is slavery."

Before meeting with the retailers, Reich visited the UNITE! Local 23-25 union hall to talk with a group of workers who have endured similar conditions in New York's sweatshops.

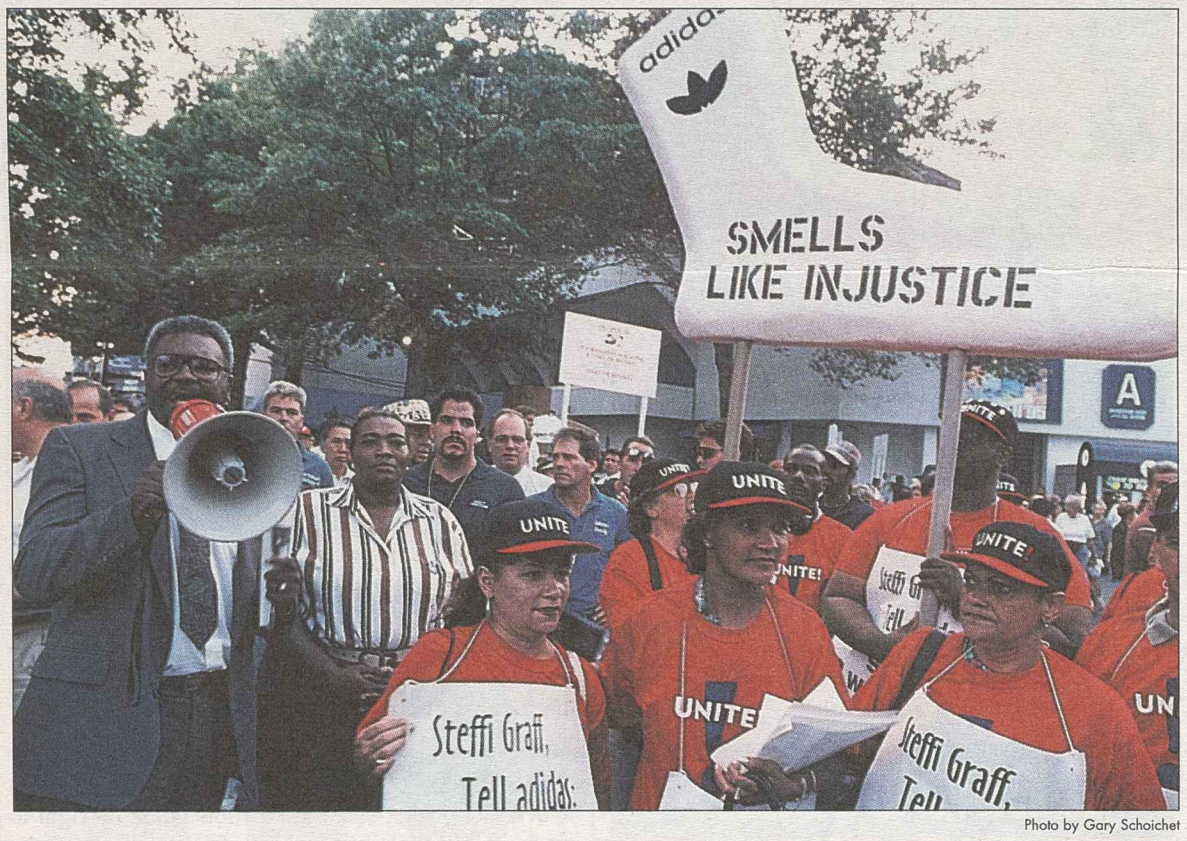


Photo by Gary Schoichet

UNITE! Executive Vice President Edgar Romney, with megaphone, leads rally at U.S. Open.

UNITE! aims volley at adidas at Open

Charging that adidas uses child laborers, generally mistreats workers and violates health and safety codes, some 150 UNITE! members rallied outside the U.S. Open tennis tournament in Queens, N.Y.

The rally was in support of workers at the Chipman-Union plant in Union Point, Ga., but the message was that workers worldwide will wage a campaign to force adidas to live up to its responsibility for the conditions of workers who make their products.

The union has asked German tennis star Steffi Graf, who defeated Monica Seles to win the tournament, to withdraw from her endorsement contract with adidas.

"We've asked adidas and Steffi Graf to take a stand for justice and help us stop the oppressive working conditions at Chipman-Union. They refused to respond," said Bruce S. Raynor, an executive vice president of UNITE!.

The Georgia plant, which is the exclusive supplier of adidas tennis and sports socks in the United States, has been cited by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration for willful and serious violations of safety regulations. Meanwhile, the National Labor Relations Board is investigating complaints that the company illegally fired and threatened union supporters, and the Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is probing charges of sexual harassment and racial discrimination at the plant.

"Adidas sets the price, sets the design and quality standards of their products, but then claims to have no responsibility for working conditions. We won't let them get away with it," said Edgar Romney, also an executive vice president at UNITE!

CBS-TV's "Eye-to-Eye" program in March reported that the German-based multinational allows children, some as young as five years old, to stitch soccer balls in Pakistan.

In shoe factories outside Jakarta in Indonesia, young women work six to seven days a week making adidas shoes, earning about $2.16 a day before employer "deductions." Their products can sell for more than $100 in the United States and Europe.

UNITE! also is asking consumers to write adidas and ask it to shoulder its share of responsibility for worker safety and decent treatment. Consumers should address their concerns to: Steve Wynne, President and CEO, Adidas America, 541 N.E. 20th St., Suite 207, Portland, Ore. 97232; FAX 503/797-4936.

— Muriel H. Cooper

AFL-CIO NEWS

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INSIDE



Daymon J. Hartley/The Detroit Journal

A fire fighter prepares to extinguish a flaming newspaper delivery truck, set on fire by security guards hired by the Detroit News and Free Press, witnesses say. More than 2,000 striking newspaper employees have overwhelming community and labor support.
See story, Page 1.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

1 *Fund will leverage organizing activity*

5 *AFL-CIO will lead drive for diversity*

5 *Convention planning clarifies schedule*

UNION YES

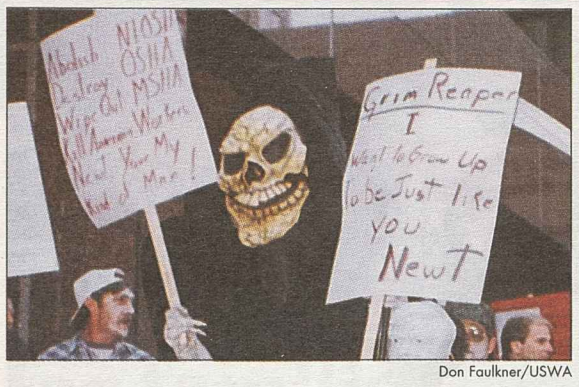
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AFL-CIO NEWS

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Don Faulkner/USWA

Deadly cuts in job safety laws stir union activism across the country. **See story, Page 5.**

Campaign cripples company union bill

By James B. Parks

The House of Representatives threw a monkey wrench into corporate America's attempt to restore company unions, as 202 members voted against the so-called TEAM Act.

The bill passed the Republican-dominated House with 221 votes, but the 202 votes against it means "the veto by President Clinton will be sustained," AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue said. It takes 290 votes to override a veto in the House, so 146 is enough to sustain Clinton's promised veto.

The surprisingly strong vote against the employer scheme was a major victory for the AFL-CIO Stand UP campaign, which had focused on many of the Republicans who eventually opposed the bill. Twenty-two House Republicans joined 180 Democrats in voting against the bill, with 15 Democrats going the wrong way.

"We applaud the 202 members of the House of Representatives who stood up to the Republican leadership and voted to reject the so-called 'teamwork in the workplace' offered by the GOP," Donahue said after the Sept. 27 vote.

"Despite a 1990s label, this is actually an attempt to bring back the company unions that historically many employers used so well to block workers' rights on the job," Donahue said.

"This kind of thinking doesn't fool anyone. Without changing existing labor law, employers and workers already can take full advantage of all forms of employee involvement, partnership and teamwork," he said. "The only thing the current law doesn't allow is employer domination of employee representatives."

The fight to protect workers' rights to form their own independent unions now moves to the Senate. A parallel measure, S. 295, has been introduced by Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee Chair Nancy L. Kassebaum (R-Kan.). Her committee has held hearings on the bill, but has not reported it out. It is unclear whether more hearings will be held or if the bill will go straight to markup.

Union members are urged to call the AFL-CIO's toll free number, 1-800/765-4440, to contact their senators and ask them to vote against the measure. Labor legislative representatives credit similar grassroots activities, including Legislative Action Committee meetings with members of Congress, with increasing House awareness of the worker backlash

Continued on Page 3



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Nearly 2,500 unionists rally in front of the U.S. Capitol Sept. 27, one of 30 events held by AFGE locals around the country to protest GOP-backed budget cuts and a potential government shutdown. A temporary resolution funding the government through mid-November was passed later in the week. **See story, Page 2.**

Coalition puts GOP on spot over Medicare

By Colleen M. O'Neill

Organized labor and its allies continue to press congressional Republicans on the details of their proposed cuts in Medicare and Medicaid, which would make seniors and middle-class families pay dearly.

Republicans have proposed cutting Medicare and Medicaid projected spending by $452 billion — or 16 percent — over seven years. The cuts would be accomplished by doubling the money recipients pay — in premiums, deductibles and co-insurance — and by cutting payments to doctors and hospitals.

At the same time, the GOP plans to give a $245 billion tax break to the wealthy and corporations.

The Medicare and Medicaid proposals come as a part of the larger budget reconciliation process, with the Senate Finance Committee drafting Medicare legislation and the House Ways and Means Committee expected to mark up its version as early as the week of Oct. 9.

The GOP plan would dismantle Medicaid and give each state a block grant of federal money.

Medicare is the federal health program for the elderly and disabled, while Medicaid serves the poor. Nearly two-thirds of Medicaid dollars are spent on services for the elderly and disabled, primarily nursing home and home health coverage.

Not only recipients of those two programs would be affected by the pending cuts. A recent study for the National Leadership Coalition on Health Care found that as much as $100 billion in added costs would be borne by employers and employees if such Medicare and Medicaid cuts were enacted.

The study concluded that this would translate into a 3 percent increase in private insurance costs. Workers with insurance coverage would suffer a $1,000 loss in real wages, on average, from 1996 to 2002.

Trade unionists and their allies have turned up the volume to flush the Republicans into the open. In ads that ran in Washington and nationwide in late September, the AFL-CIO urged Americans to "get informed, get involved and stand up for what's right."

The Save America's Families Coalition — composed of unions, the AFL-CIO and consumer groups

Continued on Page 4

Detroit unions offer settlement

Newspapers under fire, admit to major losses

By James B. Parks

Striking Detroit newspaper workers have presented a set of principles for settlement of the three-month-old dispute after the papers' parent companies admitted the strike has cost $48 million in lost revenues and drastically reduced circulation.

"This strike has caused Gannett and Knight-Ridder to lose tens of millions of dollars. It's placed a terrible strain on our members and our families," said Al Derey, chairman of the Metropolitan Council of Newspapers, which represents the striking unions. "Today, we say it's time for a truce."

In an Oct. 4 statement, Knight-Ridder CEO Tony Ridder said the daily circulation of the Detroit News and the Detroit Free Press has dropped by 162,000 copies since the strike — about a 20 percent decline. Knight-Ridder owns the Free Press and its joint operating partner Gannett owns the News.

"The papers said that they won't allow an outside agency to audit their circulation," Derey said. "So we suspect that the drop in circulation is far worse."

The key principles for settlement offered by the unions include a return to work by all strikers under the conditions of a contract that expired in April. That would be followed by 30 days of intensive negotiations during which the unions would present proposals for $15 million in labor cost savings.

At the end of the 30 days, all unresolved issues would be submitted to binding arbitration. The unions, in turn, would help the papers rebuild circulation and advertising.

A spokesman for the Detroit Newspaper Agency said it would not take issues to binding arbitration and is unwilling to get rid of the 1,300 replacement workers it has hired since the strike begun.

The unions' offer came as community leaders assailed the heavy-handed tactics of the Detroit Newspaper Agency and its hired goons, who have run down pickets on several occasions.

Continued on Page 12

AFGE prepares to make most of slight delay

Federal workers given very tenuous reprieve

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

With the passage of a continuing resolution by Congress to keep the government running, federal employees can breath easier — at least for 44 days.

Even so, the compromise plan to finance government operations after the new fiscal year began Oct. 1 will squeeze federal agencies over the 44-day period. And federal workers are keenly aware that the budget crisis could rise again when the continuing resolution runs out.

The House, by voice vote, approved the temporary spending measure Sept. 28, and the Senate approved the measure Sept. 29.

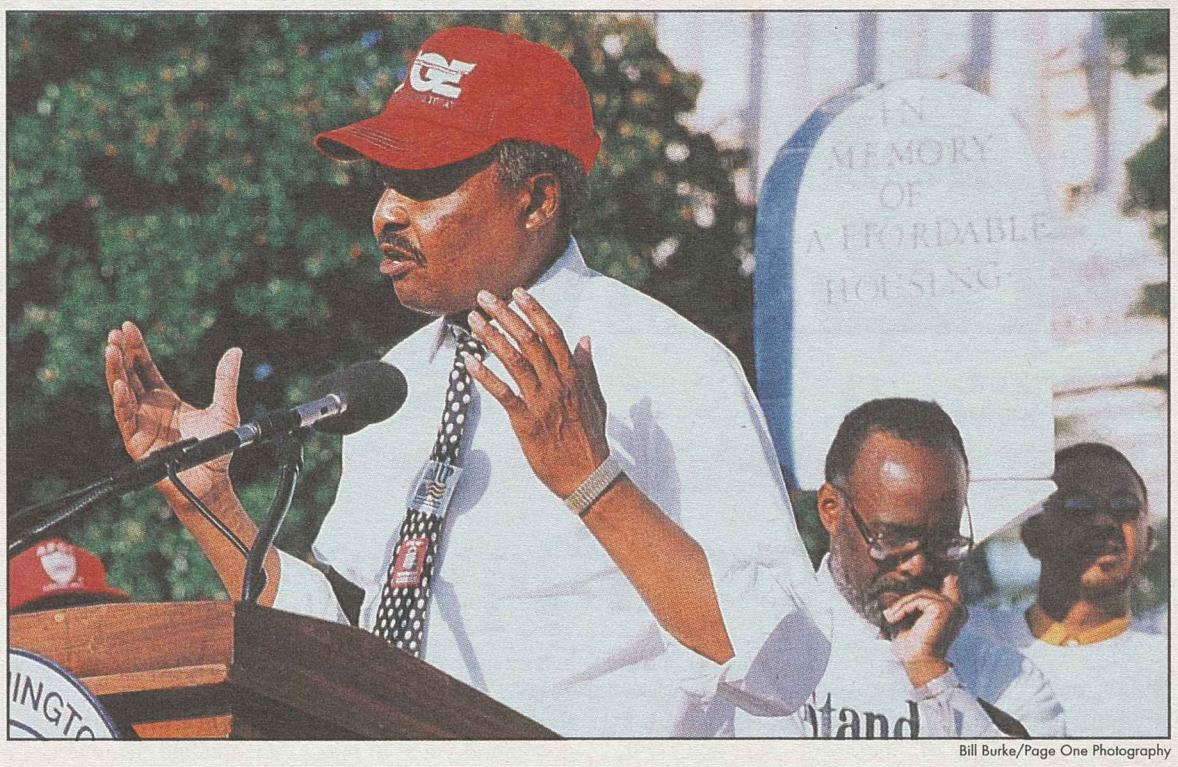
The continuing resolution will provide money to keep the government going until Nov. 13 while the White House and Congress work out differences over budget priorities.

"Because of the tremendous grass-roots efforts of federal workers — and particularly AFGE leaders and members — all across the country, some in Congress have stopped posturing over their ability to close down government, and instead have agreed to a compromise bill to temporarily keep the government running while a budget agreement is worked out," said AFGE President John N. Sturdivant.

The AFGE leader noted that some congressional Republicans have shown a continued willingness to cause a debt ceiling crisis that would shut down the government when the continuing resolution expires.

"Federal workers must keep the pressure on and not become complacent as Republicans now try to ram through a bad reconciliation bill that will seriously erode the moral obligation of our nation and endanger our children for generations to come," Sturdivant said.

AFGE locals held simultaneous rallies Sept. 27 in some 30 locations across the country, including Washington, Los Angeles, New York, Boston, Atlanta, Minneapolis, Indianapolis, Richmond, Va., Birmingham, Ala., and San Juan, P.R.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

AFGE President John N. Sturdivant addresses a rally at the U.S. Capitol. Behind him is Josh Williams, president of the Metropolitan Washington AFL-CIO, who also spoke to the crowd of approximately 2,500 unionists.

In Washington, Sturdivant, Metropolitan Washington AFL-CIO President Josh Williams and Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Local 25 Secretary-Treasurer Ron Richardson addressed some 2,500 federal employees during a rally at the U.S. Capitol. They eulogized the demise of worker rights in a potential government shutdown, while tombstones were planted at a mock grave site.

"We must step up our public opposition to proposed appropriation bills that would slash and even eliminate vital domestic programs which the taxpaying public rely upon," Sturdivant told the crowd. "Federal employees will be meeting with members of Congress in their home offices, at town meetings and in their Hill offices when they return. We will be on their cases and in their faces!"

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling joined Sturdivant at a Sept. 26 press briefing on the pending lockout. She called on Congress "to act responsibly toward federal workers who serve our nation proudly and so well." Sturdivant said it appeared that a showdown over the shutdown has only been postponed.

To prepare for the worst case, the AFL-CIO is working with a Washington bank to create a $5 million fund to provide federal workers with low- or no-interest loans. The AFL-CIO will provide $1 million in interest-free loans under a program to assist locked-out and striking workers whose funds have been depleted. That program, initiated by President Tom Donahue, was approved by the Executive Council in August.

"These steps are just the first in a series of actions we are prepared to implement," Easterling told reporters. "If necessary, we will ask the AFL-CIO Strategic Approaches Committee to develop a strategy that will focus the combined resources of our affiliated unions in support of federal workers."

The compromise formula will allow agencies and departments to tap additional funds if it appears that the constraints of the temporary measure would force layoffs or furloughs.

If the House and Senate have passed an appropriation for a particular program, the funding level for the next 44 days would fall midway between the two, minus 5 percent. If only one chamber has passed a spending allocation, the rate would be the lower of that allocation or the current appropriation.

Postal Workers get pay raises in new four-year pact

A federal arbitration board imposed a four-year contract that includes pay increases for Postal Workers, rejecting the contention by the U.S. Postal Service that postal workers are overpaid.

"Under the circumstances we did relatively well," said APWU President Moe Biller. "We could have done a lot worse."

Biller called the settlement a "fair" one that basically follows the terms of a settlement a separate arbitration panel reached Aug. 19 with the Letter Carriers. APWU represents 350,000 clerical, maintenance, motor vehicle and special delivery craft employees.

Under the Oct. 1 settlement, workers covered by the postal union will receive a lump-sum payment equal to 2.78 percent of their annual base salary for the first year and a 1.2 percent increase and a cost-of-living allowance in the second year. In the third year, they get a $400 lump-sum payment plus a COLA, and 1.2 percent plus COLA in the fourth year.

Night shift differential rates were converted to fixed amounts and frozen until Nov. 22, 1997, when the fixed amounts will be reduced by 7.5 percent. Night shift differential hourly rates applying to APWU full-time employees now range from $1 to $1.98 over 10 grades and 16 steps. As of Nov. 22, 1997, they will range from 93 cents to $1.83.

In addition, a one-time, lump-sum cash payment will be made to APWU-represented employees who worked night shift differential hours during fiscal year 1995 that just ended Oct. 1. The contract also calls for a 10 percent increase in uniform allowances, for $500,000 to fund the joint labor-management safety committee and for $1.3 million to fund the dependent care task force.

APWU, NALC and the Laborers' Mail Handlers Division were forced into binding arbitration last Nov. 21 after failing to reach agreement on new contracts. Under the Postal Reorganization Act, if the parties are unable to agree on a contract, the dispute can go to mediation and then to binding arbitration. The Mail Handlers are still in arbitration.

Mediation on the APWU dispute began Jan. 20 and ended April 6. The three-member arbitration panel then held 13 days of hearings from June 16 to Sept. 16, received post-hearing briefs by Sept. 25, and issued its 16-page award Oct. 1. The panel was headed by Arbitrator Jack Clarke, and included Joel Popkin for APWU and R. Theodore Clark Jr., a Chicago management attorney, for USPS.

The panel's decision is final and binding.

— Sharolyn A. Rosier

AFL-CIO NEWS

Director of Information: Rex Hardesty

Editor: Michael Byrne

Assistant Editors: David Kameras, Colleen M. O'Neill, James B. Parks

Staff Writers: Muriel H. Cooper, Mike Hall, Sharolyn A. Rosier

Graphics/Layout: Stan Hitt, Hindi M. Fracasse

AFL-CIO Press Secretary: Candice Johnson

AFL-CIO Headquarters: 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006
Telephone: (202) 637-5010 • CompuServe: 71112,53 • Internet: http://www.aflcio.org

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION
OF
THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE AFL-CIO
LEADING THE FIGHT FOR AMERICA'S WORKING FAMILIES

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Reconciliation promises pain for families

Democrats halt plan to overturn striker order

By Mike Hall

The Republican-dominated Congress returns from a brief recess to take up several budget issues critical to working families, including Medicare, workplace safety and pensions.

A united Democratic minority in the Senate on Sept. 28 blocked Republican efforts to move the appropriations bill for the Departments of Labor, Education and Health and Human Services, threatening a filibuster over a provision that would overturn President Clinton's executive order barring federal contracts with companies that use "permanent replacements" for strikers.

The bill, H.R. 2127, would cut funds for workplace safety programs, the National Labor Relations Board and education programs.

Because they do not have enough votes to override a promised veto, it remains unclear if Republican leaders will send the bill back to committee to be reworked or try to strike a deal with the White House.

The biggest blows to working people, however, may come in the sweeping budget reconciliation bill that is now working its way through both houses. The Republican leadership hopes to use this bill to ram through changes that will force working families to pay higher health care and education costs, increase their taxes and put pensions at risk.

The reconciliation bill is the cornerstone of the Republicans' seven-year budget plan, which includes $245 billion in tax cuts, with much of that going to people making as much as $200,000. It also eliminates the alternative minimum tax for corporations and, for the first time, allows capital gains tax breaks for businesses.

The budget reconciliation process adjusts spending and taxes to reflect the budget priorities passed in the budget resolution earlier in the year.

The reconciliation bill is expected to be ready for floor action sometime in October. Already, committees in both houses are developing parts of the massive bill. While the House and Senate bills may differ somewhat, both will reflect huge and dangerous changes in government priorities that would have a costly and threatening impact on working families.

Among the anti-worker provisions in the reconciliation bill are massive cuts in Medicare, Medicaid and guaranteed student loans. The bill also would open up some pension funds to the same kinds of abuse that earmarked the 1980s.

Federal and postal retirees would be forced to pay more for fewer retirement benefits.

The bill would repeal the Davis-Bacon and Service Contract Acts and slash the Earned Income Tax Credit program that gives small tax breaks to the working poor.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling addresses a crowd of nearly 1,000 Food and Commercial Workers at the kickoff of the union's "Blow the Whistle on Congress" campaign in Washington. The workers blew whistles and protested Republican-brokered cuts in programs that protect working middle-class families. UFCW launched the effort to spur community activism to counter the GOP's attacks on safety and health, wage-and-hour laws, student loans, Medicare and union rights.

Both the House and Senate bills would cut the guaranteed student loan program by more than $10 billion. While their approaches are slightly different, the impact would be the same — student loans would cost more in interest and fewer students would qualify because billions of dollars less would be available.

Both plans increase interest rates, increase a variety of fees on lenders and loan guarantors, establish a new fee or tax on colleges and eliminate a six-month interest-free grace period after students graduate before they must begin repaying their loans. Today, some 5.6 million people participate in federal student loans.

This scheme could boost the monthly payment for students who take out the maximum loan allowed by $382 a month to $1,452, according to the Department of Education.

The Senate's plan also would cut by 30 percent the volume of direct student loans — those straight from the government to the student with no middle man. The House would eliminate such loans completely.

As for pensions, the House Ways and Means Committee approved a plan that would free up so-called "excess" pension assets, putting in jeopardy the retirement of 40 million Americans who are vested in single-employer plans.

Currently, companies must pay a 20 percent penalty to use their excess assets. The bill would reduce that to only 6.5 percent, and eliminate it entirely for a short period. Firms could use the money for any purpose.

Experts warn that such a provision would encourage corporations to loot pension funds. In addition, the proposal defines "excess" so loosely that the pensions of future retirees could be at risk.

On taxes, the GOP proposal would give breaks to corporations and wealthy individuals while slashing a program that provides tax breaks to working families making up to $28,000.

The Earned Income Tax Credit was designed as a way to keep people off welfare by making sure work pays more than welfare. It has enjoyed bipartisan support in the past.

But the plan approved by Ways and Means would cut the EITC by $20 billion, in effect raising taxes for more than 18 million low-income taxpayers by an average of $724 by the year 2002, according to the Treasury Department.

In addition, some 6 million workers now eligible for EITC would be removed from the rolls, and benefits to millions of others would be reduced. The Senate proposal would cut $40 billion.

As part of an earlier approved tax cut for business and the wealthy, the GOP called for a $12 billion cut in the federal employees' retirement system. That could cost postal workers and federal employees between $600 and $1,000 a year in increased contributions, and up to $28,000 in reduced benefits during the course of the average retirement.

The Senate reconciliation bill also is expected to contain changes in the contributions and benefit levels for federal and postal workers, although not as drastic.

Separate bills to repeal the Davis-Bacon and Service Contract Acts have been introduced, but Republicans also plan to include repeal of these important prevailing wage laws in reconciliation.

Opponents of the wage protections have long claimed that repealing the Davis-Bacon Act would save the government billions of dollars a year. But their GOP-dominated Congressional Budget Office said there was no proof of such savings.

Close House vote on TEAM Act shows veto will hold up

Continued from Page 1

against the so-called TEAM Act and other pernicious proposals, such as the plan to dismantle job safety and health laws.

The success of the Stand UP campaign was apparent in the crossover Republican votes. Of the 22 Republicans who voted against the TEAM Act, 13 had met with labor's LACs in their districts. At the time, most expressed a lack of knowledge on the subject. Many also had been subjected to AFL-CIO radio and TV ads in their districts during recesses.

Of the 22 Republicans who voted "right," 10 are from New York, three each from New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and one each from Alaska, Texas, Colorado, Ohio, Washington and Florida. Two other Republicans, one from New York and one from Oklahoma, voted "absent" as a result of pressure from the LACs, said Peggy Taylor, AFL-CIO legislative director.

Introduced by Rep. Steve Gunderson (R-Wis.), H.R. 734, the Teamwork for Employees and Managers Act, would amend Section 8(a)(2) of the National Labor Relations Act to permit employers to "establish, assist and maintain" employee organizations.

The bill's supporters tried to sell it with the claim it is needed to foster employee involvement. But the AFL-CIO, in testimony before the Dunlop Commission and elsewhere, has made clear workers' longstanding support for employee involvement as long as employees select their own representatives and have a real voice in structuring their "involvement."

In the House debate, Democrats insisted that the more than 30,000 existing employee involvement programs prove the legislation is unnecessary. They charged the bill would allow employers to manipulate the teams or committees by choosing the employees, setting the agenda and determining whether to accept any of the recommendations.

The fact that nothing in the current law prohibits employer-worker cooperation exposed the employer call for change for what it is: an attempt to return to the company unions used so successfully by employers 60 years ago to thwart a real worker voice.

The bill "undermines workplace democracy and threatens the very foundation of collective bargaining," said Rep. William Clay (D-Mo.), ranking minority member of the House Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee.

He called the bill "the latest installment" by House Republicans to "eradicate protections afforded our work force." The TEAM Act would place "in grave jeopardy the right of workers to organize independently and bargain collectively," by permitting management "to negotiate with itself, while claiming that it is carrying on discussions with representatives chosen not by those they purport to represent but by management itself," Clay said.

Managed care offers variety of problems

By Colleen M. O'Neill

More than 100 health care activists, policy experts and workers turned a critical eye to the emerging trend of so-called "managed care" at a recent conference at the George Meany Center for Labor Studies.

Representatives of more than 30 affiliated unions and AFL-CIO departments met under the federation's auspices to consider the current state of the nation's health care and to craft a place for workers in the system and as consumers.

The Sept. 19-20 gathering included leaders who have bargained contracts containing managed care plans, health care workers with experience in managed care environments and political activists with legislative experience in the fight for comprehensive reform.

In the absence of such reform, American workers face worsening problems in attaining and keeping adequate, affordable health coverage. Unions continue to face pressure at the bargaining table to cut health costs for active workers and retirees alike, while such costs remain a central factor in the economic stagnation and decline of working, middle-class Americans.

Some 41 million Americans remain uninsured, with those ranks growing by more than 1 million each year. Low- and moderate-income working families cannot afford insurance now, with costs steadily rising, and with proposed massive cuts and restructuring in Medicare and Medicaid threatening to further shift costs onto those fortunate enough to have insurance.

To cope with the rising costs, many employers are turning to managed care approaches to health care. In fact, from 1991 to 1994, coverage under managed care plans increased from 47 percent of insured American workers to 65 percent, with the trend continuing in 1995.

Most health care providers now participate in one or more managed care plans, while employers offer a vastly reduced choice of plans as compared with the 1980s. The health plans from which employers are selecting have become increasingly aggressive in their attempts to manage both the health status of the enrollees and their use of services.

The pure concept of managing care emphasizes prevention, the development of quality measures and employment of "best practices" treatment standards, among other aspects, but too often those in need of health care have been subjected to bureaucratic hassling to outright denial of needed care.

Workers have seen this firsthand.

"The insecurity of workers in the absence of health reform is magnified as time goes on," asserted Cathy Hurwit of Citizen Action. "They are less and less in control; the purchasers and providers are in charge."

She said her group is working to pass a Managed Care Consumer Bill of Rights in each state to ensure consumers have appeals rights and due process rights.

Health care workers themselves have witnessed the abuse heaped on patients in tightly controlled managed care plans.

Celia Wcislo of the Service Employees and Candace Owley of AFT told conference attendees of nurses' angst over their diminished opportunities for direct patient care because of inadequate staffing levels and pressure by insurers to discharge people quickly. They shared anecdotes of patients suffering at the hands of insurance companies and hospital administrators determined to squeeze the bottom line.

A squeeze on spending — health care-related as well as overall municipal costs — is propelling rapid changes all over the nation.

In Los Angeles, for example, the county's financial crisis meant thousands of health care workers received layoff notices, while officials announced plans to close 29 neighborhood clinics and five comprehensive health centers.

The story is much the same elsewhere. Owley's own hospital in Milwaukee is slated for closure by year's end, she told the conference, while Wcislo described the "cannibalism" of mergers in Boston.

AFSCME's Sonia Moseley told the gathering of proposed wage cuts and reductions in job security and benefits for nurses at Kaiser Permanente, while David Bullock of the SEIU provided examples of how reductions in staffing and training have led to reduced quality of care.



Photo by Bob Jango

Seniors listen to testimony in Boston during a Save Our Security Coalition hearing on the impact of proposed cuts in Medicare and Medicaid. It was one in a series of events conducted by the group.

Plan would raise costs for all

Continued from Page 1

— also aired ads in Washington and in key congressional districts opposing the planned cuts.

Members of Congress have been asked about their stance on Medicare/Medicaid funding during Legislative Action Committee meetings in their districts, while the National Council of Senior Citizens took the battle literally to the Capitol steps.

A Trojan horse symbolizing the GOP's deceptive legislation was wheeled up to the Capitol Sept. 29, while 600 seniors gathered to denounce the measures and the procedures being used by Republicans to try to ram through changes.

The GOP leadership on both sides of Congress has ignored standard practices when dealing with legislation of this magnitude, hiding information and scheduling only one day of hearings in the House and none in the Senate.

After the rally, seniors lobbied their members of Congress with placards and information kits.

"The Republican Medicare plan is a 'Trojan Horse,' " asserted Steve Protulis, the executive director of the NCSC. It's a "clever disguise aimed at tearing down the gates of security provided by Medicare and Medicaid for millions of Americans."

Also participating in the rally were representatives of the National Council on the Aging, Older Women's League, Gray Panthers, Save Our Security Coalition, National Center and Caucus on Black Aged, Senate Minority Leader Thomas A. Daschle (D-S.D.) and House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.).

> *"What are we as a society going to be judged by? That we cut taxes or that we took care of our senior citizens?"*
>
> **— Laura Mailman, Council on Aging**

Lawmakers had been involved in a "people's hearing" on the lawn of the Capitol two days previously, Sept. 27. At that meeting, health care analysts predicted that the Republican cuts over the next seven years would mean the loss of their health care for up to 5 million senior citizens, while pushing thousands into poverty.

The Save Our Security Coalition also has been busy in the field, holding several hearings since July on the subject. The latest came Sept. 18 in Boston.

"I'm a Republican and I believe we have to do more," Laura Mailman, director of the Council on Aging in Merrimac, Mass., told the hearing. "What are we as a society going to be judged by? That we cut taxes or that we took care of our senior citizens?"

Save Our Security is supported by more than 100 organizations representing more than 60 million people, including the AFL-CIO and several unions.

Inflation jigglers would hide cuts

By David Kameras

In a classic case of trying to move the goalpost after the game has started, Congress is threatening to impose a new definition of inflation to make it easier to cut government programs and boost tax cuts for the wealthy.

By claiming that the Consumer Price Index overstates inflation, some in Congress are calling for legislation to "downsize" the benchmark measure. That way, they can substantially reduce benefits in a number of government programs, including Social Security and Medicare, without appearing to support cuts in those programs.

"This idea is simply bad public policy," said AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue. "It would inevitably result in the reduction of other adjustments made on the basis of the CPI," including many collective bargaining agreements.

"Advocates of 'downsizing' the CPI want to cut Social Security benefits and raise taxes. They're just hoping the voters won't realize that those cuts are being made," he said.

The Senate Finance Committee has been the incubator for the CPI-gutting initiative, and may be used as a device to achieve higher tax rates or Medicare cuts when the tax bill comes up, possibly this week. Donahue has admonished the Clinton administration and the Senate Democratic leadership not to buy into the scheme. "We are making every effort to focus public attention on the serious effects and side effects of this proposal," he said.

"A cut of 1 percentage point from the CPI would produce a loss of $40 billion in compensation for workers over one year, and could result in the loss of as many as 800,000 jobs over that same period," he said.

In addition, Social Security benefits would be reduced by more than $1,800 over the next six years, and taxpayers would see higher tax bills thanks to bracket creep.

Donahue noted that the Bureau of Labor Statistics found that between 1987 and 1993, the CPI actually understated by one-half of 1 percent the prices of items and services bought by senior consumers, prices mostly driven by health care, despite the biases of those who believe that a consumer's decision to reduce his or her standard of living in the face of increased prices should not be reflected in the index.

"A true picture of the impact of inflation on consumers must include the real costs of goods and services as the components of the CPI," Donahue said. "The BLS should be allowed to produce honest statistics without interference from Congress."

Improved training bill still doesn't measure up

By Muriel H. Cooper

Labor is working to salvage an amended job training bill scheduled for the Senate floor Oct. 10.

While the amended version would allow the Employment Service to develop one-stop employment service programs and provide job training employment protections, the lack of Trade Adjustment Assistance training and national set-asides for dislocated workers leaves the bill flawed, the AFL-CIO said.

S. 143 offers significant improvements over the original proposal, but "several amendments need to be offered to mitigate some serious defects," said AFL-CIO Legislative Director Peggy Taylor. "Job training and worker education are too important to be treated as side issues."

The AFL-CIO has called for the Senate to support amendments offered by Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-N.Y.) to retain TAA training, by John B. Breaux (D-La.) to require that dislocated workers get vouchers for training, and by Christopher Dodd (D-Conn.) to add set-asides for dislocated workers.

In the House, the Ways and Means Committee kept TAA entitlement for individuals and firms until 2000, but killed relocation assistance.

Congress has long maintained that workers need TAA when foreign trade agreements result in U.S. job loss. Reneging on this commitment will directly hurt workers displaced by the North American Free Trade Agreement, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and future trade agreements, said Bill Cunningham, AFL-CIO legislative representative.

The original training bill, introduced by Sen. Nancy L. Kassebaum (R-Kan.), would have virtually eliminated all federal job-related and skill-building programs, such as the TAA and school-to-work programs, Job Corps and programs for dislocated workers. And it would have eliminated state employment services, causing the loss of 15,000 jobs.

"It would put these programs into state block grants, and this means there will be little money available at the federal level to handle regional job dislocations, large-scale layoffs, including base closures, and needed demonstration programs," Taylor said.

However, Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) offered a series of amendments, including provisions to keep the Employment Service eligible for one-stop center programs, mandate governors to have a summer youth program, retain employment protection descriptions similar to the Job Training Partnership Act protections, and provide continuation grants for the school-to-work program.

JOB SAFETY

Fatal blast spurs fine

An Illinois refinery has agreed to pay $1.3 million in penalties and take a series of preventive steps in the wake of a March 1995 explosion that killed two workers eating lunch.

The fire and explosion at Clark Refining and Marketing Inc.'s Blue Island facility, which also injured three workers, happened during repair work on a valve of a gasoline-producing unit. A leak in one of the pressurized lines sent flammable liquid and vapor 70 feet into a welding shop, where it ignited.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the company agreed to the fine and hazard abatement, including a safety audit to be conducted by a third-party consultant.

Insecticide suit filed

Farm Workers and their allies are suing the Environmental Protection Agency for its decision to modify a cancellation order and allow the use of the insecticide mevinphos through the 1995 growing season.

"Mevinphos, also known as Phosdrin, is an acutely dangerous pesticide that has poisoned hundreds of farm workers in California, Washington state and Florida," the suit said.

Joining the UFW in the suit are the National Coalition Against the Misuse of Pesticides and a Washington state farm worker diagnosed with organophosphate poisoning in 1993 after working with mevinphos.

Focused inspections set

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration announced the first industries selected as part of the expansion of its focused inspection program.

The program is designed to enable agency compliance officers to focus on the most serious hazards of the job, and until now has been used only in the construction industry, with enforcement personnel focusing on falls, being struck by objects, electrocutions and trenches.

OSHA now plans to use the program in sawmills and planing mills; gray and ductile iron foundries; paper mills; and motor vehicle and car-body manufacturers. Focus hazards will be lockout/tagout and machine guarding, confined spaces, electrocutions and falls.

Employer gets jail time

The owner of a Georgia storage tank cleaning firm was sentenced in federal court to a six-month prison term for his role in the death of a worker exposed to toxic fumes.

Robert E. Swing, owner of MIT Tank Wash Inc., also received a one-year term of supervised release and was ordered to pay a $190,000 fine at his sentencing Sept. 7.

The company's employees were hired to clean residue left in mobile storage tanks after hauling food, non-hazardous materials or hazardous substances. In May 1993, Robert Girvin was directed to enter and clean a tank that had carried a hazardous gasoline additive.

There was no retrieval system in place and, after Girvin was overcome by fumes, rescuers tried unsuccessfully to rescue him. Seventeen people involved in the attempt were taken to the hospital for treatment.



Photo by Dexter Arnold

Unionists rally outside the office of Rep. Scott L. Klug (R-Wis.) in Madison to protest his co-sponsorship of H.R. 1834, a bill that would strip away safety and health laws that protect American workers

Job safety threat is call to action

By Colleen M. O'Neill

Unionists are taking the case for workplace safety and health to the heart of their communities.

Innovative rallies in several cities have shined the spotlight on the assault by Republicans in Congress on funding for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Mine Safety and Health Administration and National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

Southern Ohio unionists have taken on Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) on two occasions, most recently Sept. 26, when the Grim Reaper was on hand to "cheer on" Gingrich's efforts to strip safety and health protections for American workers.

Nearly 200 picketers accompanied the 10-foot-tall Reaper and a smaller, 4-foot-10 Junior Grim Reaper, as they rallied at a Gingrich fund-raising appearance for GOP Reps. Steve Chabot and Frank Cremeans.

Marchers also toted a coffin and numerous signs noting that a "contract that weakens OSHA will kill American workers," and various other slogans. The Grim Reaper carried the message "Abolish NIOSH; Destroy OSHA; Wipe out MSHA; Kill American workers — Newt, you're my kind of man."

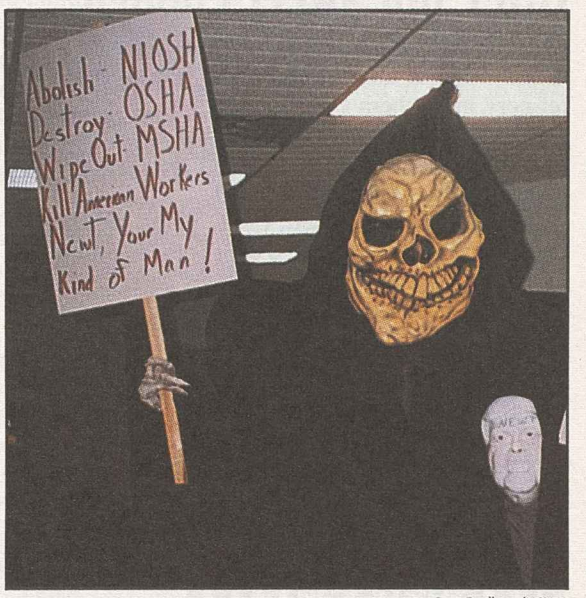
Cremeans has been a frequent focus of attention for his anti-worker stances and votes. He is an original co-sponsor of H.R. 1834, Cass Ballenger's bill to gut worker safety laws.

Those present at the demonstration included representatives of the Cincinnati AFL-CIO, Chemical Workers, Steelworkers, Machinists, Electrical Workers, Service Employees, Government Employees, Communications Workers, AFSCME, Bricklayers, Carpenters, Laborers, Aluminum, Brick and Glass Workers and many others.

Workers also have met with Chabot to lobby him to oppose any proposal to abolish NIOSH; the agency headquarters, which employs 600 people, is in his district.

Southern Ohio trade unionists also met Gingrich over the summer in Norwood during his book-signing tour.

Meanwhile, GOP Rep. Scott Klug is on the run from his constituents in Madison, Wis., as safety and health activists hold him accountable for his sponsorship of Ballenger's bill.



Don Faulkner/USWA

The Grim Reaper has a message for Newt Gingrich at a rally in Cincinnati.

More than 400 people turned out for a forum Sept. 26 at Madison's Labor Temple to hear Ron Hayes, the Alabama father featured by the AFL-CIO on its August recess Stand UP ads. Hayes' son, Patrick, was killed on the job in a grain silo.

Klug was invited to the forum, indicated early on his willingness to participate, but ultimately didn't show. In his place, members of the Madison Area Safety and Health Network put a life-size photo taken during an earlier meeting with Klug, in which the congressman appears to be inattentive and/or sleeping, with an appropriate caption.

The forum was organized by the South Central Wisconsin AFL-CIO's safety and health director, Gary Gilbertson of Food and Commercial Workers Local 538, as a followup to that meeting and a Sept. 14 rally in front of Klug's office. Trade unionists also have appeared on local radio shows, talked to newspaper and television reporters and been on public access television.

BARGAINING

UFCW, Hormel agree

The Food and Commercial Workers ratified a new four-year master contract with Hormel Foods that the union says contains the best wage rates in the meatpacking industry.

"The new contract brings solid wage and benefit improvements to Hormel workers," said UFCW Vice President Joe Hansen. "Wage rates will rise to $12 an hour, with better health and pension benefits. We're bringing economic, health and retirement security to Hormel workers and their families."

The pact, approved Sept. 26, calls for 10-cent raises in each of the first three years, along with signing bonuses of $500 this year and $300 in the final year. Pension benefits will increase from between $3 to $5 per month per year of service.

Some 2,700 workers at six Hormel plants are covered by the contract.

Denim fits UNITE!

UNITE! members at four North Carolina textile plants ratified a new contract that raises wages 4 percent and improves pension benefits and holiday pay.

The pact covers 1,200 workers at Swift Textiles in Erwin and more than 2,300 workers at Cone Mills plants in Greensboro, Salisbury and Haw River. The two companies are the world's leading denim producers, the union said.

"This puts the average wage at Cone Mills and Swift Textiles at more than $10 per hour," said UNITE! Executive Vice President Bruce Raynor. "While this is not a lot of money, it does begin to approach the goal of a livable wage for the workers."

"UNITE! denim workers continue to grow economically by beating the inflation index," said Phil Cohen, manager of UNITE!'s Central North Carolina district. "Since 1990, wages at both companies have increased nearly 25 percent."

The union hopes to extend this kind of inflation-beating contract to other southern textile companies, Raynor said. UNITE! currently is in contract negotiations with six other textile manufacturers — Fieldcrest Cannon, Leshner, Westpoint Pepperell, Springs, Bibb and Greenwood Mills.

Offer not sweet enough

For the third time, striking workers rejected a contract offer at the California and Hawaii Sugar Co. refinery in northern California.

Members of Sugar Workers Local 1, a local of the Seafarers, voted 277-117 to reject the contract, said local Vice President Bill Bennett.

Workers at the Crockett, Calif., plant, northeast of Oakland, walked out Sept. 8 over company proposals to freeze pay and increase health care premiums. There have been no formal contract talks since the strike began.

The company agreed to continue paying the workers' health care benefits for 69 days after the strike began five weeks ago, Bennett said.

The union does not expect the company to use replacement workers, he said, because "cane sugar refining is a fairly specialized endeavor and we're not that automated."

NLRB backs AFTRA

The full National Labor Relations Board found that NBC committed an unfair labor practice when it illegally denied information to the Television and Radio Artists.

Despite repeated requests from AFTRA since 1993, NBC has refused to provide information needed to assess the interlocking relationships between the network and its affiliates and its subsidiaries CNBC, NBC News Channel and Nightside.

Administrative Law Judge James F. Morton ruled in 1994 that AFTRA was entitled to the information in order to represent its members. The information would help the union determine whether work at the subsidiaries is covered by the union contract and whether the company is complying with the contract provisions.

NBC appealed the ruling to the full board.

"The decision by the board is obviously welcome news. NBC and other employers who act similarly should know that AFTRA will not roll over when the rights of its members or enforcement of our contracts are involved," said AFTRA Executive Director Bruce York.

SEIU exposes Sun's dark side

Nursing home chain under investigation for fraud

By Muriel H. Cooper

The Service Employees District 1199 has launched a public campaign to expose "The Dark Side of Sun" Healthcare Group, Inc.

With contract negotiations stalled, the union was preparing a possible strike at eight Sun nursing homes in Connecticut, affecting 1,200 workers, while turning up the heat on the chain with newspaper ads and a series of reports on the company's dubious business practices.

With two ads in The Wall Street Journal, SEIU is asking shareholders, customers and vendors to help in an FBI investigation that the nursing home chain has filed fraudulent Medicare claims.

Consumers who have noticed irregularities on bills from Sun were urged to contact the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The investigation of Sun by the FBI and HHS's inspector general was reported in The Wall Street Journal Aug. 29. The nursing home probe began in December after a former clinical director said that Sun had a "verbal" policy of misrepresenting group therapy sessions as individual sessions for billing.

The eight-month investigation has "prompted shareholder litigation and contributed to the resignation of two outside directors," the Journal reported.

SEIU has been seeking to negotiate new contracts at six of the nursing home facilities and first contracts at two more. Jerry Brown, president of the local, said 20 complaints have been issued against the company by the National Labor Relations Board.

Key issues in bargaining include a replacement of the union's current health and welfare fund, refusal to offer newly organized workers standard wage-and-benefit packages and a neutrality clause that would allow new members to come in under existing contracts.

The company has been advertising for replacement workers in newspapers in New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut, Brown said.

SEIU was set to release a series of research reports critical of Sun business operations, executive compensation, perks and the quality of patient care in Sun nursing homes — all of which depend heavily on taxpayer-supported programs for revenue.

Sun, based in Albuquerque, N.M., operates 142 facilities and expects to produce revenue of $1 billion this year. Part of the reason for its escalating success is because insurers pressure patients to leave hospitals sooner, the union said. Nursing homes have become cash cows — offering services that once were under the exclusive domain of hospitals.

The report also reveals how Sun plans to expand its operations in Great Britain, where the company expects to double its profit margins.

"At a time when the solvency of Medicare is threatened by fraud, waste and abuse, this type of corporate behavior must not be overlooked," the union's ad declared

"We're currently lobbying furiously in Washington to preserve Medicare and Medicaid benefits for all working Americans, and we're determined to see that giant corporations like Sun don't undermine them further," Brown said.

"We know several facts about this company," he said. "We know the company is trying to raise capital and pay off debts. We know they are trying to lower workplace standards.

"We know they refuse to bring newly organized workers up to standards. We know they have cut back on staffing and supplies. We know the FBI is investigating them."

Hospital workers say 'Union Yes'

Nearly 900 health care employees at hospitals in central New York state and in Puerto Rico voted for representation by the Service Employees.

SEIU Local 200A won two elections to represent some 600 registered nurses and service and maintenance workers at Corning Hospital in Corning, N.Y.

By the time the winds of Hurricane Marilyn passed, 300 workers in four bargaining units at Fajardo Hospital in Fajardo, Puerto Rico, had voted for SEIU District 1199 UNTS.

"These two victories send a powerful message to all health care employers that health care workers will win justice," said SEIU President John J. Sweeney.

Workers at both facilities sought union representation after facing layoffs and cutbacks in pay and benefits. "Of all the things this hospital needed, a union was what it needed most," said Debbie Willis, a nurse at Corning.

The Corning victory marks the first union presence at the hospital in its 95-year history, and the Fajardo election was the first attempt by District 1199 in its recent history to organize a private-sector hospital.

"This is a great victory for the workers of Fajardo, and it's just the beginning," said Carlos Davila, secretary-treasurer of the local. "We are deeply committed to new organizing in the private sector, where most of Puerto Rico's public health care jobs are heading because of restructuring."

CWA still reaching out to Bell Atlantic

Communications Workers remain without a contract at Bell Atlantic, while CWA members at other regional Bell operating companies ratified agreements.

The struggle for a fair contract for CWA's 37,000 members at Bell Atlantic has attracted the attention of lawmakers on Capitol Hill.

"AT&T and the other Bell companies have reached agreements that represent the high-road path to competition based on quality service provided by experienced and well-trained union employees," wrote Rep. Nita M. Lowey (D-N.Y.) in a letter to Bell Atlantic CEO Ray Smith. "It is my hope that Bell Atlantic will also reach an agreement with its employees that includes fair wage increases and employment security guarantees."

Lowey, co-chair of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues, attended a briefing conducted Sept. 28 by CWA President Morton Bahr and top union negotiators on the status of the bargaining.

Bahr and Lowey cited a recent report by the Institute for Women's Policy Research that warned the telecommunications industry is in danger of losing its status as a front-runner in providing high-wage jobs for women.

"Bell Atlantic's current bargaining proposal," Bahr said, "would result in women who earn an average of $25,000 a year, and who need an increase the most, receiving much less than would go to men earning $45,000." The proposal includes bonuses based on percentage of income.

Meanwhile, CWA members and Electrical Workers have approved three-year pacts with Ameritech, and CWA members also ratified contracts with Pacific Bell and Nevada Bell, two subsidiaries of Pacific Telesis, and with US WEST Communications and US WEST Business Resources Inc. Negotiations continue with US WEST Direct, where workers have authorized a strike if necessary.

CWA also announced a new tentative agreement with Southwestern Bell after members rejected an earlier pact. If ratified, the three-year contract would cover 37,000 telephone company workers in Texas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Kansas.

Finally, CWA has been keeping a close eye on AT&T in the wake of the company's announcement of a proposed restructuring.

"CWA has been assured by AT&T that the company does not plan any downsizing within the new AT&T services company or in the new product and systems company, which are the areas where our 86,000 members work," said CWA Vice President James Irvine, who is the union's chief negotiator and head of labor relations with the company.

"Our contracts with AT&T, which will remain in place at the new entities, provide for transfer rights throughout the corporation, retraining and other protections, and we expect to be discussing and working out special problems and needs that will arise in this restructure."

— Colleen M. O'Neill

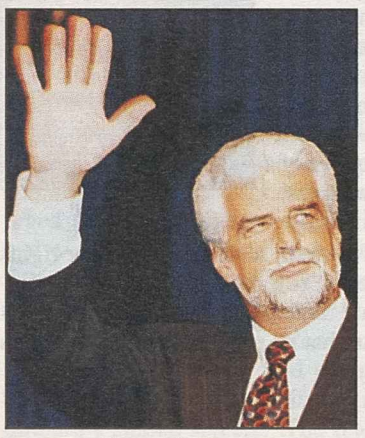
McCarron set to speak for all carpenters

New UBC officers focus on organizing, politics

By Sharolyn A. Rosier
Las Vegas

Delegates to the Carpenters 37th convention elected a new president, Doug McCarron, who vowed to demand that "every carpenter be paid a living wage — not just union carpenters, every carpenter."

McCarron, formerly the 2nd vice president, was unanimously elected along with Jim Patterson, formerly the secretary, to the merged position of secretary-treasurer. Other new officers include Doug Banes, who was elected 1st vice president, and Andy Silins, elected 2nd vice president.



Doug McCarron

Paschal McGuinness, the incumbent 1st vice president, did not seek reelection after being elected secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department.

Sigurd Lucassen, who previously had announced his retirement as president of the union, firmly backed the McCarron slate. "We have laid a solid foundation for growth," he told the convention. "Now is the time to pass the tools of leadership to a new generation."

The new officers take office after a 45-day transition period.

"For too long now we have let Wall Street treat our wages, and the wages of every worker, as just one more cost, one more item in the budget to be held down to keep profits up," McCarron told the more than 2,000 delegates and guests.

He assailed the Republican leadership in Congress, particularly Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, "who calmly says that our wages will be set in South China, by a regime that relies on slave labor."

They have forgotten, he said, "that working men and women, earning union wages and benefits, are the backbone of the middle class."

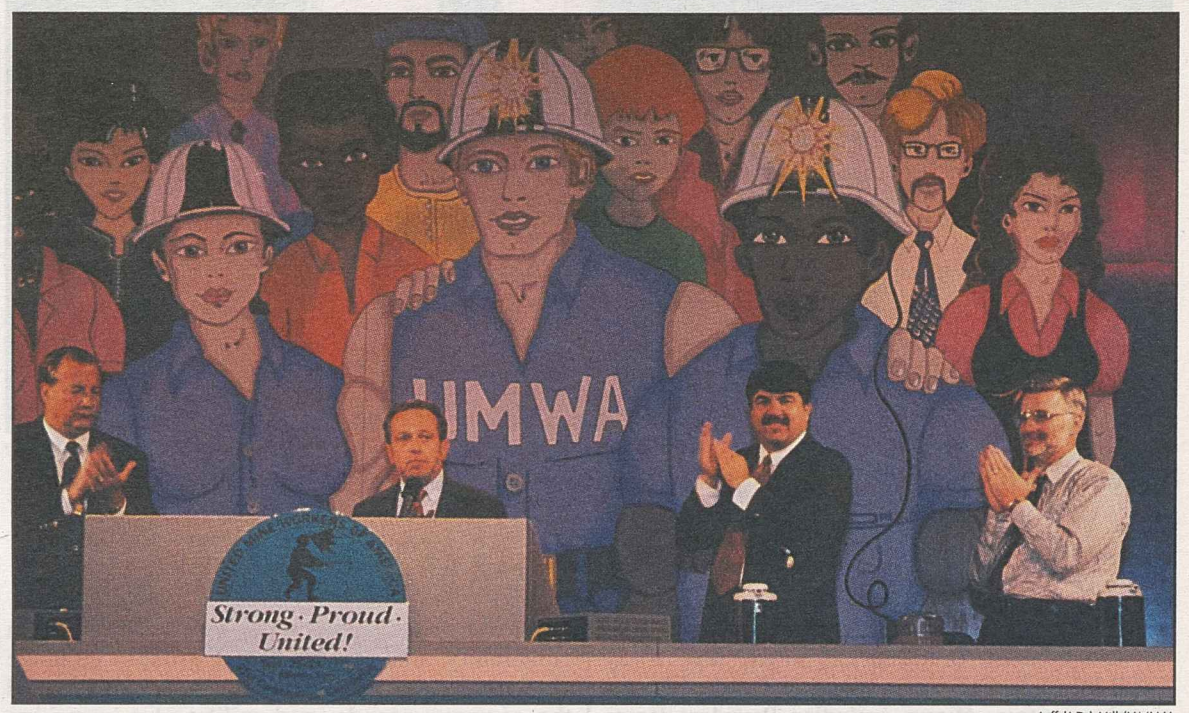
AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue congratulated the Carpenters for setting organizing, political action and service as the "Pathways to the 21st Century." Since he and Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling were elected in August, those themes have been central to the AFL-CIO, Donahue told the delegates.

He vowed that the AFL-CIO would lead the labor movement on a massive organizing campaign, including an effort to go beyond the current structures of U.S. labor law, "offering assistance to small groups of workers that then could form the nucleus for union representation."

Service Employees President John J. Sweeney, running against Donahue for president of the AFL-CIO, said political action is a close second to organizing among his priorities. He praised the UBC's move to bring political campaigning back to the districts and locals and ending "checkbook" political action.

Housing and Urban Development Secretary Henry Cisneros lauded the UBC for using its pension funds to put men and women to work. In 22 cities, a HUD-UBC partnership is preparing public housing residents for building trades apprenticeships.

Other speakers included Reps. Marcy Kaptur (D-Ohio) and Peter DeFazio (D-Ore.); Nevada Gov. Bob Miller; California Lt. Gov. Gray Davis; Robert Georgine, president of the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department; Dominic Martell, president of the Plasterers and Cement Masons; and Irv Fletcher, president of the Oregon AFL-CIO.



Jeff (J.D.) Hill/UMWA

Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich receives a warm welcome from Mine Workers officers, from left: Secretary-Treasurer Jerry Jones, President Richard L. Trumka and Vice President Cecil Roberts.

UMWA vows organizing renewal

By James B. Parks
Miami Beach

The Mine Workers made organizing the centerpiece of their agenda for the year 2000, establishing a $1 million organizing fund and pledging to seek new members outside the coal industry.

The only way that working people ever won dignity, respect and fairness was "by agitating, educating, mobilizing and organizing for it," UMWA President Richard L. Trumka told the union's 51st constitutional convention.

The crisis facing workers, Trumka said, "isn't only that there are too few good-paying jobs and too many workers who need them. It's that there are too many workers earning poverty wages and too few who are being organized."

"We know that given the opportunity, 30 percent of American workers would join a union today if only they had the chance," he said. "And we know that unless we make it our business to reach out to those workers, unless every single member becomes an organizer, the rate of unionization in this country is going to continue to decline."

Under a banner proclaiming that the union was "Strong, Proud, United," the 800 delegates approved a plan to pay for the organizing fund by reducing by at least 1 percent the amount deducted per pay period for the strike fund, which now stands at $75 million.

The plan calls for rank-and-file organizers to be assigned to UMWA organizing drives, with their lost wages paid equally by the local and international unions.

For the fund to garner organizing success, the union will have to shift its attention to organizing large units inside and outside the coal industry, organizing director Joe Hamilton said.

The union, which has about 75,000 active members, would still have less than 100,000 members "if we organized every non-union coal miner in the United States and Canada," Hamilton said.

Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich told the convention the Clinton administration will fight efforts by the Republican-dominated Congress to eliminate health and safety laws for miners or to roll back labor laws such as Davis-Bacon and the Service Contract Act.

"There are some people in Washington who want to take the cop off the beat with regard to mine safety. They are proposing to roll back a quarter century of progress in making mines safer," Reich said.

"There is no excuse for trying to save a few pennies by risking the lives of working people. There is no excuse for turning our coal fields into killing fields, and we're not going to allow it," Reich said to an emotional standing ovation.

President Clinton, who spoke to the convention via satellite, said the crux of the debate with the Republicans over a balanced budget is whether "we want a government that upholds our values as a community and stands on the side of working people struggling to build better lives for themselves."

Clinton, the first president to address a UMWA convention, promised he would "keep faith" with the nation's working people. He vowed to fight to save MSHA and protect coal miners' retirement benefits under the Coal Act, which he called "our country's solemn covenant" with the retirees.

The delegates also approved resolutions calling for an increase in the minimum wage to 50 percent of the average hourly earnings of private-sector workers and supporting "labor-friendly" political candidates.

Delegates also endorsed the "New Voice" slate of candidates for the leadership of the AFL-CIO, including Trumka for secretary-treasurer. They heard from Service Employees President John J. Sweeney, who is running for president of the AFL-CIO, and AFSCME Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson, who is running for executive vice president of the AFL-CIO, a position the slate hopes to establish at the AFL-CIO convention.

Other speakers included Laborers President Arthur A. Coia; AFSCME President Gerald W. McEntee; Sen. Jay Rockefeller (D-W.Va.); Rep. John Lewis (D-Ga.); National Labor Relations Board General Counsel Fred Feinstein; Peter Michalzik, general secretary of the Miners International Federation; and Economic Policy Institute President Jeff Faux.

AFTRA in step with media changes

Los Angeles

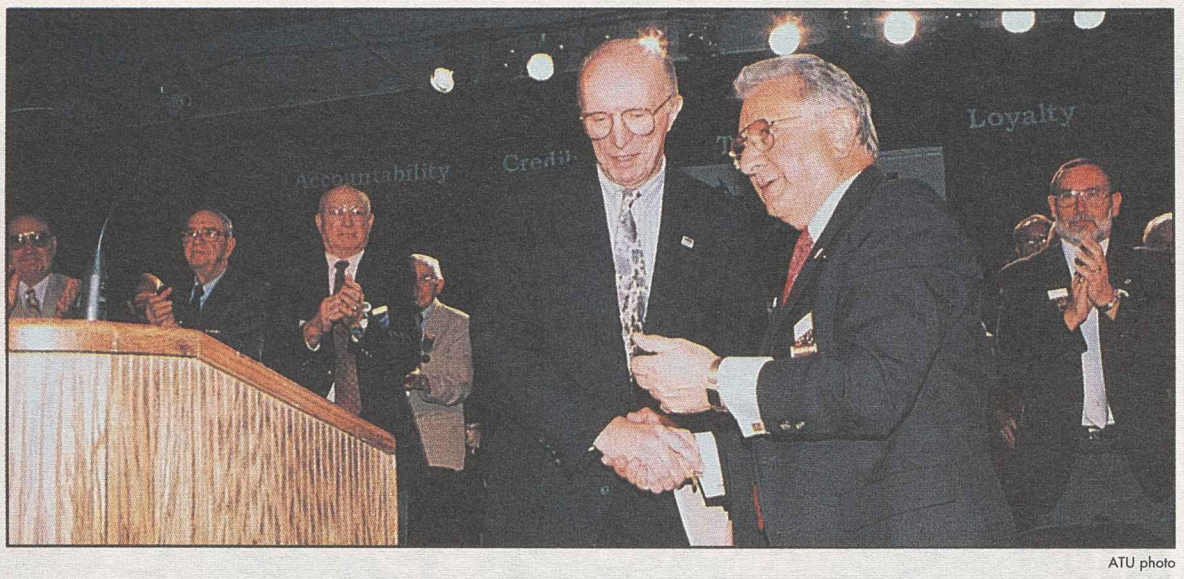
The Television and Radio Artists prepared to meet the challenge of corporate mergers and rapidly changing technology by restructuring the union.

Delegates to the union's 55th convention also reelected President Shelby Scott, 1st Vice President Denny Delk, 2nd Vice President Rich Holter and Treasurer Lillian Clark to new two-year terms. Also elected were Fred Anderson as secretary and six vice presidents. All the national officers were elected by acclamation.

The restructuring plan, approved by a 5-1 margin, is designed to eliminate waste and duplication of effort, streamline the union administration, maximize financial resources and augment the national staff.

To the extent feasible, the national office, located in New York, and its two largest locals, in New York and Los Angeles, will be run as a single administrative and financial entity. Local boards and staffs in the two cities will be maintained but operations will be changed to allow more flexibility and allocation of staff.

A uniform dues structure will be phased in, subject to membership approval, and all billing will be done by the national office. Scott also reported on merger talks between AFTRA and the Screen Actors Guild. Both unions' boards approved a proposed merger in January, but several key issues still need to be resolved, she said.



ATU photo

AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue gets a standing ovation as he is greeted by ATU President James La Sala.

ATU votes to stay the course

Delegates to the 51st convention of the Amalgamated Transit Union in Las Vegas Sept. 18-22 voted by acclamation to return to office its international executive officers, including President James La Sala, Executive Vice President Warren S. George and Secretary-Treasurer Oliver W. Green.

La Sala noted that ATU has emerged from a bitter struggle with Greyhound Lines a stronger and more resilient union. Greyhound now enjoys a cooperative relationship with the ATU, whose members have a solid contract, he said.

AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue praised ATU and its officers for "outstanding leadership, dedication and loyalty" to the cause of protecting workers throughout the United States and Canada, and gave special emphasis to the union's successful defense of Section 13(c) of the Federal Transit Act and winning the strike against Greyhound. "Those are the signs of a great union," he said.

Donahue outlined his plan to greatly expand the federation's dedication to organizing the unorganized. "We must organize. We must grow. It is a matter of survival," he said.

Transport Workers President Sonny Hall said labor must take the offensive on worker protections, transit funding and job safety, quoting Phoenix basketball player Charles Barkley in saying, "We are in the butt-kicking business, and business is good."

"Labor must take part of the blame for the Republican takeover" of Congress last year, Hall said, and must educate union members on the issues. "Grassroots political action is the key to success," he said.

Enlarging on that idea, A. Philip Randolph Institute President Norman Hill presented a "blueprint for victory:" motivate by forming new coalitions with community and environmental groups; mobilize voters and stress upon them the need to understand the common agenda; and militate by increasing organizing activities and supporting strikes and boycotts.

"We must understand that our future prosperity and the political stability of our nation depend on addressing the needs of the many, not the needs of the few," he said.

Also re-elected to ATU posts were nine members of the executive board, including Richard C. Branson, Jackie B. Breckenridge, James H. Daley, Tommy Mullins, Oscar Owens, Melvin W. Shoppert, Michael J. Siano, Wilford Spears and Joseph Welch.

The convention agreed to resolutions on a number of issues, including mass transit employee protections, union-management cooperation programs, U.S. public employee rights, affirmative action and the Union Privilege program. Delegates also decried "right-to-work-for-less" laws and sexual harassment in the workplace.

The union followed Donahue's address by approving a motion endorsing him for president and Barbara Easterling for secretary-treasurer at the AFL-CIO convention later this month.

Speakers included Bob Georgine, president of the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department; John Calhoun Wells, director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service; Ontario Federation of Labor President Gord Wilson; Gene Morrill, coordinator of performing arts, George Meany Center; and California Assemblyman Bob Campbell (D).

— David Kameras

Metal trades to fight for shipyard jobs

Las Vegas

Which side are you on?" That's the question workers in the nation's shipyards, nuclear facilities and the various industrial operations represented by the AFL-CIO Metal Trades Department will be asking candidates as the political season heats up.

Delegates to MTD's 65th convention approved a legislative and political program stressing policies that require both the Navy and commercial ship owners to rely on American yards for new shipbuilding and repair. The department called for continuing federal construction differential subsidies and adoption of stricter preference requirements for shippers to use American-built and manned vessels to carry cargo.

Since 1981, some 84,000 shipbuilding jobs were lost to foreign competition. The metal trades blame those losses on policies that have encouraged U.S. ship owners and the Navy to go overseas for new ships and for ship service and repair. At one time, the United States was the world's leader in shipbuilding. Today, slightly more than 100,000 workers are engaged in shipbuilding.

Additionally, the legislative program urges MTD-represented workers to actively oppose what MTD President John Meese called "the Republicans' contract with themselves" and its provisions aimed at destroying worker rights and benefits.

Meese, initially elected last year to complete the term of Paul Burnsky, who retired in January 1994, was re-elected by acclamation along with a slate of 10 vice presidents to four-year terms.

The convention approved a program to set up legislative and political action programs within each of the MTD's 51 local councils with the responsibility to communicate the department's legislative priorities to Congress and political hopefuls.

While the Republican contract is like a "gun to the head of organized labor and workers," many of the problems confronting MTD-represented workers can be addressed effectively at the bargaining table, Meese said. He outlined a five-point collective bargaining program to enlist employers to support a growing share in wages, pensions and working conditions, employment security and apprenticeship programs in return for cooperation to help employers compete more effectively.

AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue told the convention that the AFL-CIO is refocusing its priorities on organizing, worker education and communications. He reported that the AFL-CIO is looking at a number of innovations in representation alternatives, encouraging associate membership programs, developing cooperative organizing programs, fostering greater membership involvement in unions through better worker education programs and "generally improving the way we communicate our goals to the public."

Lynn Meyers, executive director of the AFL-CIO Human Resources Development Institute, expressed HRDI's gratitude for the longstanding relationship with the MTD in its efforts to develop re-training and conversion programs for dislocated workers. He predicted continued demand for HRDI's services as the nation faces "an unprecedented level of layoffs in service industries and white-collar jobs because of new technologies."

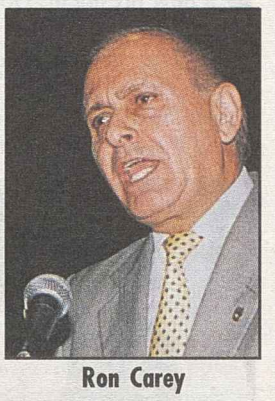
TTD plans to mobilize for worker rights

By David Kameras

Uniting behind the theme of "Moving America Forward," delegates to the AFL-CIO Transportation Trades Department's second convention heard a call to collective action to counter anti-worker legislation festering in Congress.

"Through our unions, we are fighting on Capitol Hill to move America forward, keeping it on the right track," declared TTD President Ron Carey, president of the Teamsters.

"Today, with the stroke of a pen, Congress is threatening generations of progress in this country — making cuts for working people while opening huge new tax loopholes for big corporations and the rich," he said. "In fact, this Congress is doing everything but address the real problems transportation workers face."



Ron Carey

Carey listed a number of current attacks on workers, including efforts to raid the railroad retirement system, rescind bargaining rights contained in Section 13(c), build and flag ships foreign and deregulate and globalize industries, that taken together mean that no mode of transportation is untouched.

Carey suggested grass-roots action as the appropriate response.

"We've got good lobbyists here in Washington," he said. "But our clout doesn't depend on their golden words. It depends on our strength in the politicians' own backyards."

Rep. Richard J. Durbin (D-Ill.), a candidate for retiring Sen. Paul Simon's seat, urged union leaders not to let the GOP divide working people with such issues as guns, school prayer and gays in the military, but to focus on economic issues.

"'96 has got to be the paycheck election," he said. "'96 is make or break. Let's make it.

"If you chart the rise and fall of the middle class, the line pretty much follows the rise and fall of unionism," Durbin said, noting that working families are having trouble making it even with both husbands and wives working.

"It's what happens in capitalism when you don't have balance and equity . . . and a right to bargain collectively," he said.

Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich said the Clinton administration has been "fighting and standing on the side of unions right from the beginning," appointing people "who know collective bargaining is not a privilege — it is a right."

"We've got to have cops on the beat," he said.

Transportation Secretary Federico Peña pointed to recent legislative victories in enhancing the odds of retaining Davis-Bacon, Amtrak and 13(c) as evidence that labor's voice will be heard.

"Despite the sea change in Congress, lawmakers and voters aren't in the mood to turn back the basic rights of workers," he said.

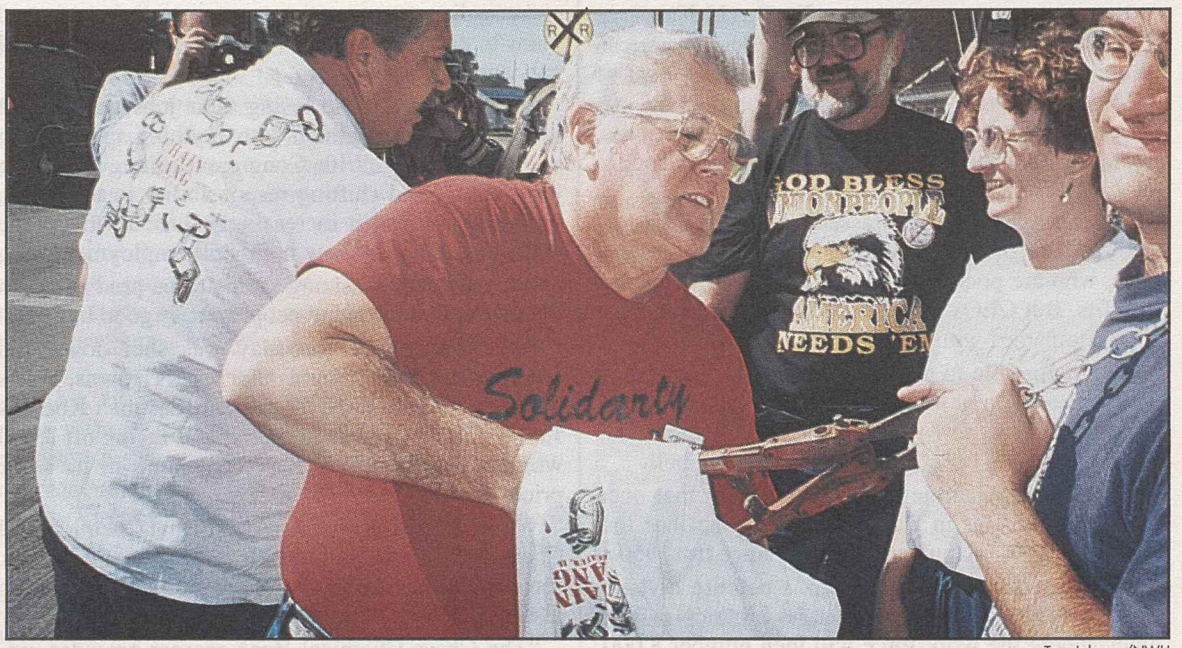
Josh Williams, president of the Metropolitan Washington AFL-CIO, invited delegates to join him at a Capitol Hill rally, at which a coffin and 26 tombstones representing major labor issues were left "at the door of (Rep. Newt) Gingrich . . . to say, today is the last day of his speakership."

Transportation Communications Union President Robert Scardelletti complained to National Mediation Board Chair Maggie Jacobsen, one of the guest speakers, about her agency's inaction on a union request to be released from mediation, thereby preventing workers from striking the nation's major freight rail carriers.

Carey suggested that a proposed one-third cut in the National Labor Relations Board's budget may reflect a desire by lawmakers to push workers toward mediation and away from their right to strike.

Peña announced a $250,000 grant to the Fire Fighters to improve safety in the transportation of hazardous materials through a training program in emergency response for IAFF instructors.

State federations elect officers, set agendas



Tom Johnson/NWU

Larry Solomon, president of UAW Local 751, gets an assist from Roger Gates (left), president of Steelworkers Local 713, as he cuts the chains off Bob Naiman, one of the protesters who chained themselves to the gate at A.E. Staley Co. in Decatur, Ill., over the company's attempt to impose 12-hour rotating shifts on the workers. Among the 750 Paperworkers who have been locked out by Staley for 27 months, several "Road Warriors" took the message of the struggle to meetings of state AFL-CIOs.

Colorado

Crested Butte, Colo.

Delegates to the Colorado AFL-CIO voted to raise per capita 5 cents per member per month starting next January, with another nickel increase effective January 1997.

Among the resolutions supported by the approximately 170 delegates included a salute to former AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland, support for the AFL-CIO Human Resources Development Institute and the move of the state COPE convention to before the state's primary elections.

Delegates lent their support to striking Graphic Communications Union members who have been permanently replaced at A.B. Hirschfeld Press, and to UAW members in their struggle with Caterpillar.

Delegates also attended workshops on the Stand UP campaign, the Legislative Mobilization and Organizing committees in the state, Union Label and LaborNET.

Speakers included Gov. Roy Romer.

Connecticut

Hartford, Conn.

Some 500 delegates at the Connecticut AFL-CIO convention in Hartford greeted Republican Gov. John G. Rowland with silence.

Rowland, who has alienated working people throughout his first term by supporting attacks on public employee collective bargaining and prevailing wage, urged the labor activists to put aside past animosities and work with his administration to create good jobs.

But the delegates continued their silence after his speech.

In a keynote address, Communications Workers President Morton Bahr told delegates the varied attacks by Republicans on affirmative action and welfare are a smoke screen. "The real problem lies with businesses downsizing, with failed trade policies and old-fashioned corporate greed."

The delegates also passed numerous resolutions, including a salute to retired AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland for his "distinguished leadership and lifelong commitment to the labor movement."

Maryland-D.C.

A heavy schedule of workshops and legislative issues greeted 180 delegates to the Maryland and Metropolitan Washington AFL-CIO's mid-September convention in Washington.

The gathering, opened by Washington Mayor Marion Barry and Metropolitan Washington AFL-CIO President Josh Williams, featured sessions on the federation's Stand UP campaign, workers' compensation, COPE and the Product Liability Fairness Act.

Delegates also discussed potential actions of Maryland's legislature during its next session, including the approval of gambling initiatives, collective bargaining issues for public employees, privatization of government jobs and the possible reintroduction of so-called "right-to-work" legislation.

AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue, federation Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling and Service Employees President John J. Sweeney, who is challenging Donahue for AFL-CIO president, all spoke to the delegates. Other speakers included Reps. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.) and Bernard Sanders (I-Vt.) and Maryland Lt. Gov. Kathleen Kennedy Townsend.

Nebraska

North Platte, Neb.

Delegates to the Nebraska AFL-CIO convention urged the state legislature to pass "fair-share" legislation to allow unions to charge nonunion workers for representing their concerns in grievances, arbitration and negotiations.

Nebraska AFL-CIO President Gordon L. McDonald said the fee-for-service arrangement protects unions against major expenditures on behalf of free riders who, by federal law, have to be represented the same as union members, but, by state "right-to-work" laws, as in Nebraska, don't have to pay an agency fee for those services.

Delegates also supported binding arbitration for state public employees. Nebraska's constitution does not allow public employees to participate in binding arbitration, but instead sends disputes through lengthy court sessions.

Delegates also voted to oppose legislation that would allow prisoners to do work typically done by bargaining units. "We have one legislator who is pushing to allow prisoners to do more and more," said McDonald.

The delegates heard from a variety of speakers, including workers locked out by A.E. Staley in Decatur, Ill., Gov. Ben Nelson (D), AFL-CIO COPE Director Richard Walsh, Laborers President Arthur A. Coia, Indiana AFL-CIO President Charles C. Deppert and Nebraska's Supreme Court Chief Justice C. Thomas White.

North Carolina

Asheville, N.C.

The North Carolina AFL-CIO began gearing up for the crucial 1996 elections at its annual convention by focusing on political organizing.

This year's elections are important for working families, said Secretary-Treasurer James Andrews, because several anti-worker members of Congress from the state are up for re-election, including Sen. Jesse Helms (R) and Rep. Cass Ballenger (R), author of the bill to gut workplace health and safety laws.

Organizing and political directors from various unions and the AFL-CIO Industrial Union Department addressed the 300 delegates on organizing victories and successful organizing techniques. The delegates also received reports on efforts by UNITE! to gain a first contract at Kmart in Greensboro and by the Paperworkers to end the long dispute at A.E. Staley in Decatur, Ill.

The convention re-elected President Christopher Scott and Andrews along with 16 members of the executive board. Eight new board members were elected.

The convention also honored retired IUD organizing director Harold McIver for his efforts to organize workers in the state.

Key resolutions passed by the delegates included support for public-sector organizing and the creation of a new state labor communications association.

North Dakota

Bismarck, N.D.

Delegates to the North Dakota AFL-CIO convention elected new officers and heard from numerous speakers.

State AFL-CIO President David Kemnitz was re-elected to serve a four-year term and Girard Firesz was elected secretary-treasurer. Former secretary-treasurer Myron Yantzer did not run but will remain director of COPE. Firesz is executive director of the North Dakota Public Employees Association/AFT.

The delegates also elected three new trustees: Gary Neuhardt of the Postal Workers, Arnold Zins of the Paperworkers and Curt Henke of the Electrical Workers. The executive board also was reorganized on a representative basis, rather than the previous regional concept.

Speakers included Robert E. Wages, president of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; Peggy Taylor, director of the AFL-CIO Legislative Department; Louise Sundin, president of the Minnesota AFT; Bruce Beelman, area director for Occupational Safety and Health Administration; Don Morrison, chair of the Progressive Coalition; Ray Francis, AFL-CIO regional director; Randy Kiser, COPE regional director; and Allan Bergman, president of the North Dakota Farmers Union. Delegates also were addressed via satellite by Democratic Sens. Kent Conrad and Byron L. Dorgan and Rep. Earl Pomeroy.

Oregon

Portland, Ore.

The leadership of the Oregon AFL-CIO received a vote of confidence as delegates to the 40th annual convention Sept. 18-20 re-elected President Irvin H. Fletcher and Secretary-Treasurer Bradley K. Witt.

The convention adopted 42 resolutions, including ones supporting a more livable minimum wage, affirmative action, Medicare and Medicaid, civil court remedies for injured workers, a bill of rights for learning, the Human Resources Development Institute and the Union Privilege program.

Speakers included Gov. John Kitzhaber (D); state Treasurer Jim Hill (D); state Labor Commissioner Jack Roberts (R); Secretary of State Phil Keisling (D); Attorney General Ted Kulongoski (D); and Reps. Peter DeFazio (D-Ore.), Elizabeth Furse (D-Ore.) and Ron Wyden (D-Ore.).

Vermont

Rutland, Vt.

Delegates to the Vermont AFL-CIO 39th constitutional convention re-elected its top officers.

Vermont AFL-CIO President Ron Pickering was re-elected to his second term. Dick Gammell and Florence Stancliffe were re-elected to serve a fourth term as executive vice president and secretary-treasurer, respectively. Jill Charbonneau was appointed as a new board member.

Delegates also participated in a seminar on Vermont's workers' compensation law and a special session on organizing state retiree councils.

Speakers included Sen. Jim M. Jeffords (R-Vt.); Rep. Bernard Sanders (I-Vt.); Gov. Howard Dean; AFL-CIO Regional Director Frank Myers; COPE Regional Director Michael Noonan; Charles E. Mercer, secretary-treasurer of the Union Label and Service Trades Department; and Dolly Tunney, director of membership development for Union Privilege.

Washington

Takoma, Wash.

More than 500 delegates met to "Stand UP for Washington's Working Families," focusing on Republican attacks on basic labor standards during the Washington AFL-CIO convention Sept. 21-23.

The convention acted on more than 50 resolutions and participants joined in workshops addressing such diverse topics as worker training, workers' compensation, Union Privilege, political action, health care, affirmative action, legislation and community action.

Speakers included Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich, Occupational Safety and Health Administrator Joseph Dear, Sen. Patty Murray (D-Wash.), Rep. Norm Dicks (D-Wash.), Gov. Mike Lowry (D-Wash.), AFSCME Secretary-Treasurer William Lucy, Farm Workers co-founder Delores Huerta and AFL-CIO Civil Rights Director Richard Womack.

Downsizing craze undermines American system

By David Kameras

Spurred by a race to the bottom line, American corporations are rushing to implement a host of job-slashing plans — from moving production offshore to greater reliance on temporary, part-time, freelance, independent contractors and other contingent workers.

The downsizing fad impresses Wall Street investors even as it results in higher compensation for executives, who are pocketing the difference in wages and benefits. But CEOs may be mortgaging the future of their companies with these tactics.

It is impossible to pick up a newspaper these days without seeing a new wave of layoffs and plant closures. In the past few weeks alone, tens of thousands of workers have been banished to pink-slip hell.

- Procter & Gamble Co. closed a plant that once provided 550 jobs in Baltimore, a city that has lost almost 100,000 manufacturing jobs since the 1950s.
- Westinghouse Electric Corp.'s defense division will cut 1,000 jobs, mostly from its Linthicum, Md., plant, where the work force will then number 8,000, down from 17,000 in 1988.
- Two days after AT&T announced it is breaking up into smaller companies, 600 workers at its computer manufacturing plant in Liberty, S.C., began punching out for the last time, the first of 1,184 who will be gone by Christmas. Restructuring of the telecommunications giant is expected to result in the loss of 10,000 jobs in computer fabrication alone, and 20,000 throughout the company.
- Dial Corp. will close six plants and lay off 700 workers as it "restructures" its consumer products operations.
- More than 840 union workers will be laid off by Jan. 1 at a Boeing helicopter plant outside of Philadelphia.
- The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey gave pink slips to 300 employees. Some 300 more likely will be asked to leave next year.

According to one estimate, companies announced plans to cut 32,262 jobs in August, following 23,283 cuts announced in July.

And many of those losing their jobs will have a hard time replacing them with anything approaching comparable pay. With Congress slashing funds for job training and shifting responsibility to the states, workers will find it increasingly difficult to get the skills they need for new high-skill employment.

The cult of downsizing seems to be predicated on the theory that throwing people out is good business.

After New York Newsday was shut down and employment cut at several other papers it owns, Times Mirror's stock jumped 69 percent. Eastman Kodak's June 1991 announcement that it was laying off 3,000 workers resulted in an 8 percent jump in its stock price.

When Wall Street heard recently that Chemical and Chase banks were cutting 16 percent of their work force, investors drove up the price of stocks for both institutions by 11 percent.

"The Chase-Chemical Bank merger provides evidence that some stocks do get more valuable as a result of these job-cutting mergers," said AFL-CIO economist Markley Roberts.

Bad for business

That may be good for the stockholders — and the executive officers who hold the stock options — but it isn't necessarily good for the company.

There is increasing evidence that companies that resort to massive layoffs do so again and again, because the short-term cost-cutting gains, which meld well with Wall Street's fixation with short-term profits, have little staying power.

Many of the 1980s' high-profile ax wielders, like Sears, Roebuck and Co., Westinghouse Electric Corp. and Zenith Electronics Corp., saw return on equity plummet after they showed the door to their workers. According to a 1991 study, more than 1,000 companies failed to gain expected savings from restructuring 64 percent of the time.

"The fact is, getting rid of workers is bad business, and does nothing to boost revenue," Roberts said. "It weakens a company's resource base, leaving it less able to respond to technological and business cycle changes, and to maintain or increase market share. CEOs can't seem to see beyond the next quarterly report, and workers pay the price."

Reliance on temporary workers

Temp agency employment jumped 70 percent from 1990 to 1994, helping to make Manpower Inc., with a payroll of 750,000, the nation's largest private employer. Overall job growth rose less than 4 percent during that period.

According to a survey by the Conference Board, contingent workers make up at least 10 percent of the payroll at 21 percent of 91 responding big companies, up from 12 percent of respondents in 1990. Some 35 percent expect to reach that level by 2000.

As a result, the implied contract between workers and employers that underlies the economy's need for a stable, motivated work force — a secure and honest day's pay for an honest day's work — is being shredded by those who sign the checks. The downward push on wages offers ominous signs for society's future.

"A lot of Americans feel business is simply in the process of making profits for shareholders, and not caring for workers," Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich told a group of business executives.

"I don't believe it," he said. "But I get nervous when I travel around the country and hear as much resentment and discouragement . . . as I do."

"If we resign ourselves to living in a country where 40 or 50 or 60 percent of our people have declining wages over the next 10 years, then you'll get political instability, you'll get controls on capital, you'll get protectionism and you'll get other upheavals," Reich warned.

Ryder's losses mounting as IBT strike rolls on

The Teamsters won a big victory Sept. 20 when the National Labor Relations Board threw out a claim by Ryder Automotive Carrier Division that a strike against the company is illegal.

"Our members are winning this strike in the courts and on the picket lines," IBT President Ron Carey said.

The effectiveness of the strike against Ryder became abundantly clear when it was revealed that the carhauler will post third quarter losses of between $10 million and $15 million, in contrast to $9.6 million in earnings a year earlier.

Not suprisingly, management agreed to resume talks on Oct. 8.

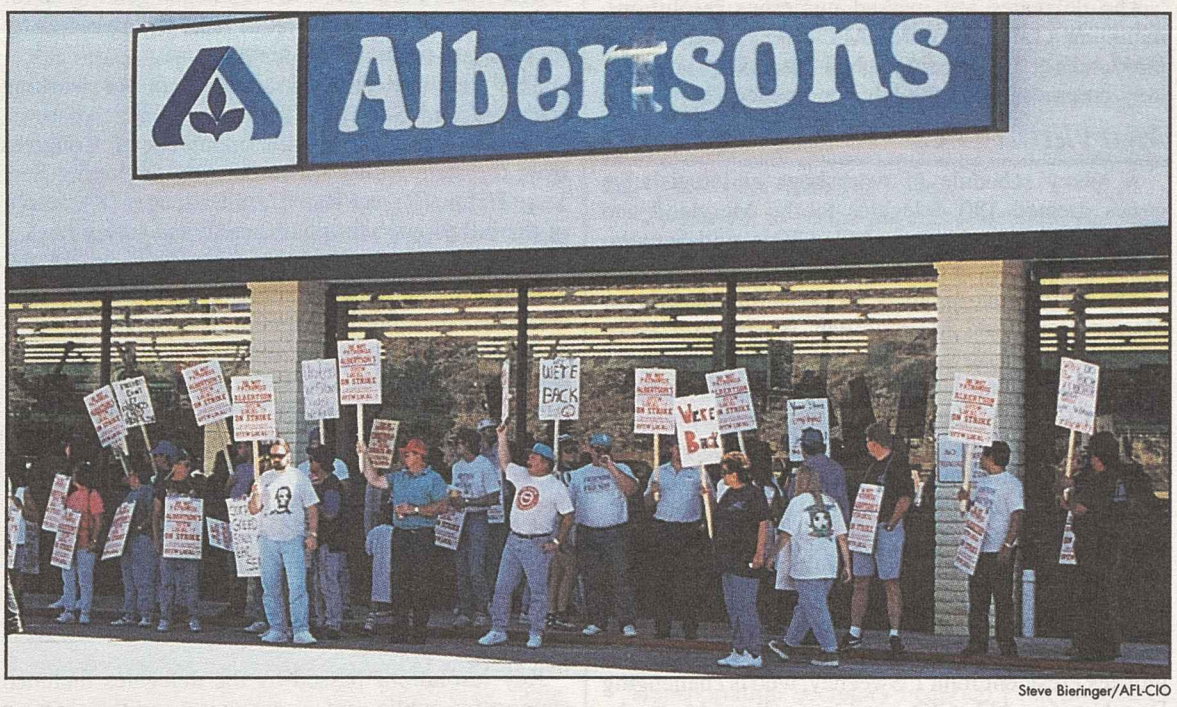
"The executives at Ryder have no one but themselves to blame for these losses," said Carey. "The quickest way to stop these losses is for Ryder and the carhaul companies to come back to the table with a fair agreement."

Some 5,000 Teamsters walked out Sept. 7 in an unfair labor practice strike after nine months of negotiations failed to produce a new contract with the nation's largest carhaul company. So far, Ryder has been unable to deliver half a million cars to dealers, and the action has cost the company up to $25 million.

Reports have streamed in from around the country from dealers who are desperate for cars, just at the time when the new model year is supposed to be celebrated in their showrooms. General Motors Corp. has offered dealers $100 bounties to cross picket lines and retrieve the cars themselves, but many have refused to do so, and some have donated money to Teamster families affected by the strike.

The bounty scheme "backfired by dragging car dealers deeper into a labor dispute that should have been settled at the bargaining table," said Ron Owens, co-chair of the union negotiating committee.

Although selective action was directed solely at Ryder, the largest carrier, other employers reportedly have split with Ryder by agreeing to accept a work preservation clause the IBT demands.



Steve Bieringer/AFL-CIO

Members of Food and Commercial Workers Local 7 rally outside Albertson's grocery store in Rock Springs, Wyo., after voting to continue their strike when the grocer tried to reopen with nonunion workers. The strike began Oct. 7, 1994, and was discontinued when Albertson's shut down. In a letter to the strikers, AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue and Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling pledged the solidarity of the entire labor movement "to send a message to all the Albertson's of the world – we will not stand by and let them trample our rights for a few more dollars of profit. We will fight back and we will prevail."

UPS is not an airline, NLRB rules

In a major legal victory for the Teamsters, the National Labor Relations Board ruled unanimously that employees of United Parcel Service should remain covered under the terms of the National Labor Relations Act.

In so doing, the board rejected arguments by management that UPS is an air carrier, which would have placed its unionized workers under the Railway Labor Act. Such a move would have given the union less flexibility in developing collective bargaining strategies.

UPS provides "air transportation for a relatively small number of time-sensitive packages," the NLRB said. Nonetheless, these operations "exist primarily to carry out the core business of UPS, which continues to be the ground transportation of small packages."

"UPS failed in this brazen attempt to undermine workers' rights," said IBT President Ron Carey. "We've proven what was quite obvious: a package company is not an airline."

The company claimed that the NLRA designation made it harder for it to compete with other parcel firms. However, with 1994 profits of $947 million, nearly five times that of its nearest competitor, the UPS argument was in a head-on collision with reality.

The decision should break a logjam of unfair labor practice charges that have been pending board action. "The board should stop UPS from illegally changing work conditions and unilaterally imposing a team concept program without negotiating with the union," said Ken Hall, interim director of IBT's parcel division.

AFL-CIO action opens early

Delegates to the AFL-CIO convention in New York City are urged to come early for a full weekend of events on some of the labor movement's most vital issues.

A conference on diversity and full participation will be held Saturday, while four workshops on pressing issues will be featured Sunday. Both will be held at the convention site, the New York Sheraton Hotel.

The conference, "Building on Diversity/Achieving Full Participation," opens Friday night with registration and a reception, before a full day of activity Saturday coordinated by the AFL-CIO Civil Rights Department. Constituent groups organizing the conference include the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, the A. Philip Randolph Institute, the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, Frontlash, the Coalition of Labor Union Women and the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement.

The conference will feature eight sessions on such issues as affirmative action, women's concerns, organizing and leadership development. Other activities will include dialogue with the AFL-CIO Full Participation Committee and a briefing for the news media by the six support groups.

"The goal is a better labor movement," said Civil Rights Director Richard Womack, "through examination of different ideas and approaches to full participation. Diversity increases opportunity, which in turn strengthens all our organizations."

The AFL-CIO Education Department is putting together the Sunday workshops on organizing for growth and power, grass-roots legislative action, taking labor's message to the public and political action for 1996. "At union meetings of every kind, planners have been striving to give the delegates a chance to be fully involved," said Dorothy Shields, director of the Education Department. "These workshops give us an opportunity to educate ourselves and glean the best practices from everyone in order to build stronger unions."

For more information on the full participation conference, contact Susana Gomez, 202/637-5271, in the Civil Rights Department. David Cohen (202/637-5152) of the Education Department can supply more information on the Sunday workshops.

NEWSMAKERS

The New York City AFL-CIO honored its retired president **Thomas Van Arsdale** for his 40 years of membership in Electrical Workers Local 3 and 30 years as an officer of that local. For the past 10 years he also served as unpaid president of the New York City central body. "As a rank-and-file member or an official of his local or international union, he has brought to every position and undertaking the virtues of fidelity, honor and service," the central body said. Van Arsdale was succeeded by **Brian McLaughlin,** also a member of IBEW Local 3.

Rex Hardesty will retire as director of the AFL-CIO Information Department, effective Nov. 3. Hardesty, 58, joined the federation staff in 1969 as editor of the AFL-CIO magazine, the Federationist, and became director of the department in 1987. He has been a member of The Newspaper Guild since 1965.

Steve Yarmola, 69, will retire Oct. 31, closing a career as AFL-CIO chief photographer. Yarmola began his union career in 1951 as a photographer for the Union Label Department. He left in the mid-1950s to serve a number of affiliates as a photographer for a Washington printing firm and returned to the federation in 1975.

AWARDS

Dave Ransom has received the International Labor Communications Association's Max Steinbock Award for his analysis of the nationwide rail strike of 1894. His work, "Pullman: A Century Later," appeared in the September-October 1994 issue of the Carpenter. The award, named for the late ILCA president, is given annually for the "best journalistic effort which exemplifies a humanistic spirit." **Ellie Spielberg** and **Paula Stromberg** received honorable mentions for their works. Spielberg's "Clary Grant — Local 99's Miracle Worker," appeared in the Ladies' Garment Workers publication Justice and depicted the importance of the union's membership assistance program. Stromberg tackled the issue of harassment in the workplace for the Office and Professional Employees' Canadian affiliate, the Office and Technical Employees, through their publication, OTEU News.

Eight ILCA member publications received "Awards of Excellence" in various categories of the Saul Miller Awards for coverage of last year's health care reform campaign. The award is named for a co-founder of ILCA who also served as director of the AFL-CIO's Department of Information. All awards, including general category awards, will be presented Oct. 21, following the ILCA convention in New York.

Judging the contest were **Dick Warden**, retired UAW legislative director; **Ken Young**, retired executive assistant to former AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland; **Roger Sheldon**, retired associate editor of the Carpenters; **John M. Barry**, retired managing editor of the AFL-CIO News; **Mary Jackson Scroggins**, writer; **Ken Germanson**, retired Allied Industrial Workers communications director; and **Mary Lord**, an editor from U.S. News & World Report.

John FitzGerald received the Television and Radio Artists' highest award, the George Heller Memorial Gold Card Award, bestowed on those who made a "significant contribution to AFTRA and its members." FitzGerald, a Cleveland broadcaster and AFTRA member since 1953, is a trustee of the union health and retirement fund, a former national vice president and national board member.

Emergency board backs rail unions

Rail labor generally was pleased with recommendations by a second presidential emergency board to advance talks between a dozen unions and Metro-North, a commuter railroad serving New York.

Included in the three-member board's recommendations is a 10 percent pay hike over three years, which would bring wages closer to the level of the Long Island Rail Road, also operated by the Metropolitan Transportation Agency. The current disparity between the two jointly managed lines has been a longstanding point of contention between labor and management.

While complete parity would still not be achieved, Tim Grandfield of the Transport Workers characterized the PEB's guidance as "a decent wage increase," and said his union was "pleased that the board accepted our last best offer."

United Transportation Union General Chairman Anthony Bottalico said he was "delighted with the recommendations. . . . Hopefully (management negotiators) will come to their senses and use the recommendations as a framework" for an agreement.

The Teamsters called the development "positive," while expressing disappointment that the PEB still fell short of the union's wage and sick leave demands.

In other rail developments:

● Local Division 269 of the Locomotive Engineers has ratified contracts with the Long Island Rail Road, taking its members through 1998.

A new four-year pact, starting retroactively on Jan. 1, 1995, features a 1.5 percent signing bonus, a 3 percent raise retroactive to July, 3 percent in May 1996 and 4 percent in July 1997. Other provisions include a $10-per-shift allowance for license certification costs, a broad health plan administered by the MTA and work-rule changes. In addition, unionists reached settlement on an outstanding three-year pact from 1992.

As part of the deal, the BLE division acknowledged that its May 26 walkout was illegal and assumed a $2 million fine. However, the fine will not be collected provided no further illegal actions are taken through 2000.

● After two years of struggle, 450 members of the Transportation Communications Union ratified a three-year contract with Grand Trunk Western, featuring annual 3 percent wage hikes and separation benefits to clerical workers whose positions are transferred to parent Canadian National.

● The Locomotive Engineers have met with most of the nation's major freight railroads to determine how to address local issues during national contract negotiations. BLE is proposing a two-track approach to talks that would allow local affairs to be negotiated on property, subject to the autonomous decisions of the union's general committees.

— David Kameras

UNION NEWS

UFCW mergers net 28,000

Two mergers have brought the Food and Commercial Workers 28,000 additional members.

The 15,000-member United Textile Workers' merger with the UFCW was approved by delegates to a special convention Oct. 2, while the 13,000-member Distillery Workers' merger with the union was ratified through votes held at local union meetings. It became official Oct. 1.

Under the terms of the agreements, the 1.4-million-member UFCW will create a Distillery Workers Trade Division and a Textile Workers Council.

"The growing number of UFCW mergers reflects a growing solidarity among trade unionists," said union President Douglas H. Dority. "We are revitalizing organizing, collective bargaining and membership service through shared resources to accomplish shared goals. We can do better together than we can separately."

Cook workers go SEIU

Stymied in court after a heroic 17-month strike, employees at Cook Family Foods ham processing plant in Grayson, Ky., decisively voted again for union representation.

The 248-144 vote for the Service Employees came after the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit rejected a National Labor Relations Board bargaining order based on illegal firings. The NLRB then revoked the 1993 certification of the Firemen and Oilers, which later merged with SEIU, and ordered the second election.

Although the workers voted for the union in 1991, it took two years for the unit to become certified. The company refused to recognize and bargain with the union and 365 workers voted to strike in late 1993.

On Feb. 21, 1995, the appeals court ruled the NLRB did not have adequate evidence when they ruled that Cook illegally fired three workers. In March, the workers decided to unconditionally end the strike. "We began another organizing drive around the issues of safety, dignity, wages and an unfair point system," said organizer John Thacker.

Cook Family Foods currently is on the AFL-CIO national boycott list, and its parent, ConAgra Inc., has been the subject of a coordinated campaign by the federation's Strategic Approaches Committee.

Most employers pick scabs

The willingness of employers to replace legal strikers remains strong, a survey by the Bureau of National Affairs' Collective Bargaining Negotiations and Contracts Service found.

While only 18 percent of respondents said they would not replace their workers if struck, 37 percent said they would do so — either permanently or temporarily — and 43 percent said they would consider doing so. The 37 percent of employers who said they would replace workers during a walkout is the highest percentage in the eight years the service has asked the question.

Willingness to replace striking workers was expressed by a higher percentage of manufacturers (83 percent) than nonmanufacturers (72 percent) and by a higher percentage of small companies (81 percent) than large companies (76 percent).

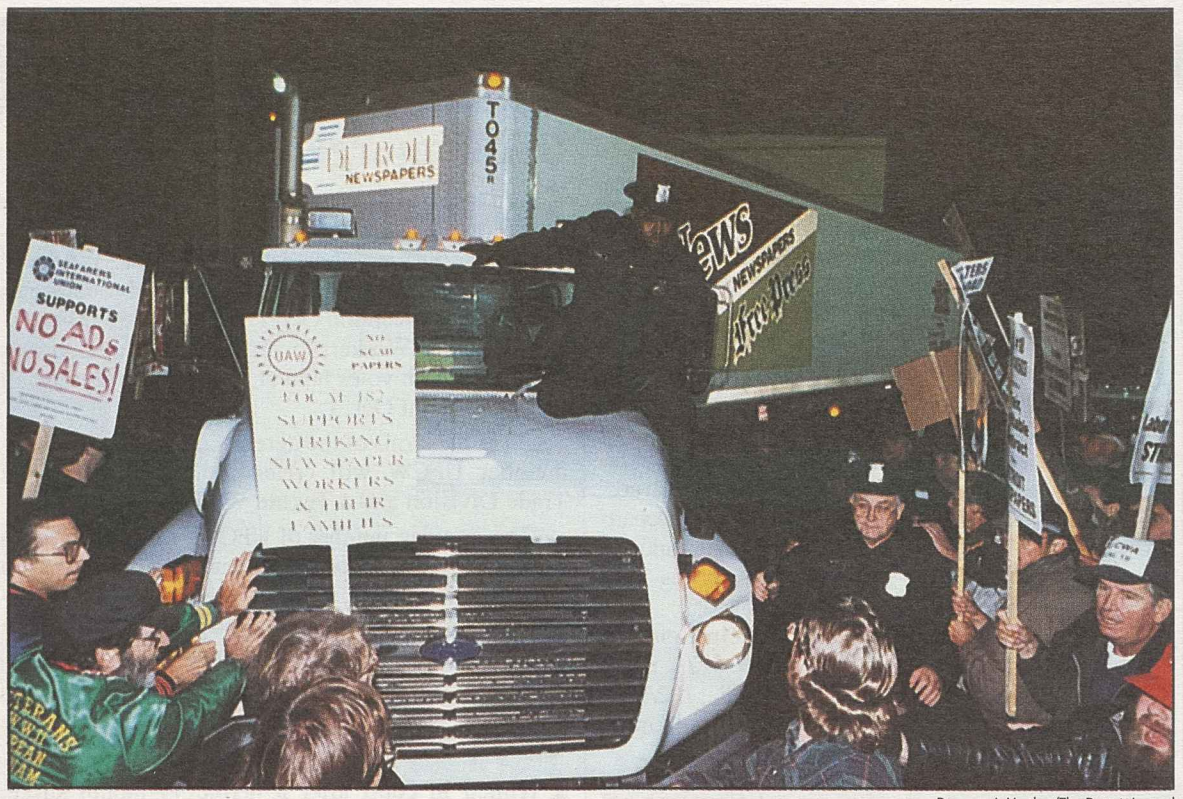
Workers focus of 'Donahue'

A recent episode of the "Donahue" talk show focused on two infamous examples of workplace abuses in California — the El Monte sweatshop and the firing of La Conexion Familiar workers who tried to form a union.

Appearing on the show Oct. 2 were U.S. Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich, a representative of the workers from the El Monte sweatshop that held 72 Thai men and women captive, and a former Sprint employee.

The show examined the systematic abuse that many immigrants face in the United States. The former Sprint employee told of how the predominantly female and Hispanic Sprint telemarketing office La Conexion Familiar was closed abruptly when its 200 employees tried to form a union.

The National Labor Relations Board charged Sprint with more than 50 violations of U.S. labor law, and Mexico has called for ministerial consultation over Sprint's actions under provisions of the NAFTA labor side agreement.



Daymon J. Hartley/The Detroit Journal

A Sterling Heights police officer sits astride a scab-driven Detroit News delivery truck, trying to push pickets out of the way. Several strikers have been hurt, at least one seriously, by Detroit News Agency security goons operating with impunity under the eye of the police. Prosecuters are investigating some of the incidents.

Union-busting violence backfires

Advertisers want no part of Detroit scab papers

Continued from Page 1

The chief corporate negotiator is under investigation for criminal charges, and city leaders are questioning the police's handling of the strike by 2,600 workers at the two newspapers.

Several top Detroit public officials plan to investigate the actions of local police during the strike. City Council President Maryann Mahaffey, who witnessed a night of violence against strikers firsthand, said she wanted to know why police allowed Vance guards to charge into a crowd of 200 picketers outside the papers' Clayton distribution center without provocation.

The vicious attacks on strikers have been shown dramatically with the erection of a billboard that includes a photograph of a Sterling Heights police officer kicking striking pressman Frank Brabanec, who is down on the ground in the clutches of another police officer. The billboard reads: "You have no rights in Sterling Heights."

Mahaffey, the city council president, got a personal taste of the violence by DNA's hired guns when her husband was among the picketers who were shoved, but not injured, in the Oct. 1 incident. Police arrested 10 strikers, but no scabs, Mahaffey complained.

Executive Deputy Police Chief Benny Napoleon said a videotape of the Clayton incident shows the guards shoving picketers with plastic shields and striking them with batons, in violation of an agreement with police to stay inside the gates and let police handle the demonstrators.

In another incident Oct. 3 at the same plant, a 38-year-old picketer was injured by a newspaper delivery van. He is still hospitalized with a broken arm and leg. The driver fled the scene and was later arrested and charged with felonious assault with a motor vehicle.

The Macomb County prosecutor is investigating another incident in which a protester was struck Sept. 3 at the Sterling Heights distribution center. A DNA truck rammed into a locked steel gate, striking a Teamster member with the gate as it crashed through. Other workers were nearly hit as they scrambled out of the way of the truck.

Prosecutor Carl Marlinga confirmed that Gannett Senior Vice President John Jaske, chief negotiator for the DNA, is one of the subjects of the criminal investigation. Jaske was at the plant at the time the ramming occurred.

"If there was an order given with total disregard for human life, it would make . . . the attempted murder charge appropriate," Marlinga told the Detroit Journal.

Hundreds of advertisers have dropped out of the papers since the strike began as a result of community pressure and the dwindling circulation. With the heaviest advertising season of the year coming up — Thanksgiving and Christmas — Derey said the papers risk the prospect of continued revenue losses.



Daymon J. Hartley/The Detroit Journal

Detroit City Council President Maryann Mahaffey, shown marching with pickets, has called for an investigation into police complicity in violence by the Detroit newspapers' hired guns.

Within the past several weeks, 25 more advertisers dropped out, including three major Detroit car dealerships that pulled ads after representatives of UAW Local 412 expressed their concerns about the strike.

Among the major advertisers that have deserted the newspapers in the past several weeks are Montgomery Ward, Bennigan's, Color Tile and Home Depot. Home Depot and Montgomery Ward were two of the six advertisers targeted by the AFL-CIO in a national campaign. The other four companies dropping out are J.C. Penney, Lord & Taylor, Target and Hudsons.

More advertisers are expected to pull out after the DNA, which administers the joint operating agreement, refused to allow an outside agent to verify its cooked-up circulation figures.

"I don't see why anyone would want to advertise in an unaudited, unreliable imitation of a real newspaper," Derey said.

Crain's Detroit Business reported Sept. 25 that the DNA refused to allow the Audit Bureau of Circulation, the periodical industry's largest independent auditing group, to conduct an audit of the paper's circulation.

Advertisers and ad agencies rely on ABC figures to determine media buying strategies. "Every reputable newspaper in the country uses the Audit Bureau," Derey said. "Why would an advertiser want to buy ads from a publisher who won't provide verifiable circulation figures?"

The employees of the News and Free Press have been on strike since July 13 after negotiations failed to produce a new agreement. Management has imported scab reporters and hired union-busting security goons to deliver newspapers.

Machinists reject new Boeing pact, go out on strike

By James B. Parks

Some 32,500 Machinists in three states walked out at the Boeing Co. at midnight Oct. 5 after overwhelmingly rejecting the company's latest contract offer.

More than three-fourths of the workers voted to reject both the contract and to authorize the strike. "Boeing workers are angry that the company keeps winning orders for new airplanes while sending more and more jobs overseas," said Robert Gregory, the union's lead negotiator.

"Workers productivity is up 30 percent since 1990. Quality is way up, yet workers feel less secure than ever," he said. "Our members are tired of seeing their jobs destroyed and they want a contract that addresses job security."

The company has demanded unlimited rights to subcontract jobs and cuts in employee health insurance, the union said.

"Boeing is crying poor mouth and demanding cuts in health insurance benefits, but our members aren't buying it," said Bob Johnson, an official of IAM District Lodge 751 in Seattle. "Why should a Boeing worker lose $914 a year to health care cuts, when the company made $6.6 billion in after-tax profits since 1990?"

Boeing "introduced its demand for health care cuts right out of the blue, during the final stages of negotiations, without providing union negotiators the time or information necessary to evaluate" the proposal, Gregory said.

The union is ready to negotiate a fair agreement "at any time and any place," Johnson said, "as soon as Boeing is ready to address the outstanding concerns of our members. But until then, our members will be on the picket lines, and Boeing won't have any airplanes to deliver."

The workers voted throughout the day Oct. 5 on two questions: whether to accept the pact, which required a simple majority, and whether to authorize a strike, which required a two-thirds majority. Under the union constitution, unless two-thirds vote for a strike, the company's proposed contract is automatically accepted, IAM Vice President Lee Pearson said.

The locals on strike are located in the Puget Sound area, Portland, Ore., and Wichita, Kan. The IAM last struck Boeing in 1989 for 48 days. The union strike fund currently totals more than $120 million, Pearson said.

AFL-CIO NEWS

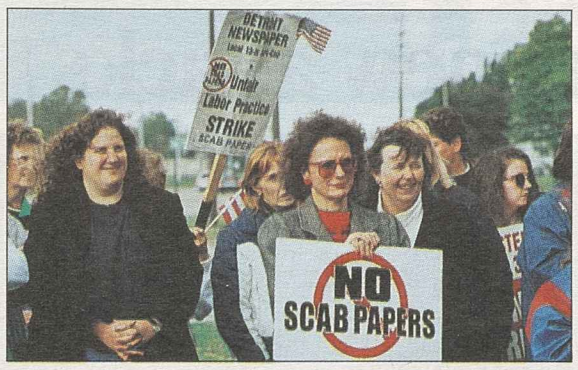
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Community support helps strikers keep pressure on Detroit newspapers. **See Story, Page 8.**

AFL-CIO NEWS

VOLUME 40, NUMBER 22 OCTOBER 23, 1995

Delegates Stand UP for labor movement

By Michael Byrne

The 21st constitutional convention of the AFL-CIO opens in New York Oct. 23 under the Stand UP banner that labor has wielded this year to rally workers against the congressional Republicans' legislative assault on working families.

But for delegates to this extraordinary convention, Stand UP will have an additional purpose and meaning as they decide how to define the very future of organized labor.

On the convention's first day, between the welcomes and President Clinton's evening salute, nearly 1,000 delegates will set the stage — and determine the rules — for an historic election between AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue and Service Employees President John Sweeney. Lane Kirkland, the second AFL-CIO president, resigned Aug. 1 and Donahue was elected by the Executive Council.

Donahue and Sweeney are both Irish-American Catholics who rose out of the same local, now SEIU Local 32B-32J in New York City.

The presidential contest is the headliner at a convention that marks the 40th anniversary of the founding of the labor federation. Both candidates have left little doubt that, regardless of the outcome of the election, the AFL-CIO is preparing to change in dramatic, fundamental ways.

The campaign has revolved around four major themes — the need for the federation to revitalize union organizing, to boost labor's political and legislative effectiveness, to improve labor's communications and public image, and to open up the process to involve more women, youth and people of color.

Delegates to the convention will consider a number of program and policy changes, but also basic structural changes in the federation. A series of constitutional amendments will be offered in the afternoon of the first day, including one that would allow nominations and voting to be moved up to Tuesday and Wednesday, respectively. A two-hour debate between the presidential candidates is planned for Tuesday afternoon.

Everyone agrees that organizing must be the No. 1 priority if the federation is to staunch "the dramatic decline in organized labor's power since the 1970s," the Executive Council notes on its report to the con-

Continued on Page 12



Palm Beach-Treasure Coast (Fla.) AFL-CIO photo

Unionists continue to haunt House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.), who was confronted on a stop in West Palm Beach by union members and retirees protesting massive cuts under the GOP "Contract on America."

Medicare message carries to Hill

By Colleen M. O'Neill

The AFL-CIO launched a new round of television and radio ads to dissuade House Republicans from devastating cuts in Medicare.

The ads, aimed at 36 members of Congress, ran Oct. 13-19 in 18 markets and on CNN. While they didn't prevent the House from passing its Medicare-slashing bill, 231-201, on Oct. 19, they kept up the drumbeat against the ongoing Republican efforts to drastically reduce Medicare and Medicaid while handing out $245 billion in tax breaks, primarily to corporations and the wealthy.

AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue discussed strategy with state federation presidents in conference calls Oct. 16, noting the $1.2 million in new ads raises the federation's media stakes in the Stand UP campaign to approximately $4 million.

The AFL-CIO also is mailing 400,000 eight-panel cards to union retirees in 57 districts in 18 states. That direct-mail piece alerts retirees to the Republicans' plans and the possible consequences. It also urges seniors to stand up and fight back against the slashing Medicare cuts.

The mailings will be followed by telephone bank-generated calls to encourage recipients to use the AFL-CIO's toll-free number to send the message to Congress not to break its promise to seniors on health protection.

The Medicare proposals being developed in both houses of Congress would slow the rate of spending on the program, raise premiums and deductibles for recipients, reduce fees to providers and encourage a shift to managed care and health maintenance organizations as a way to keep down further cost increases.

House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) had sought to deflect criticism of the Republicans' tax giveaway by separating Medicare from the budget reconciliation process. Medicaid funding remains part of the overall budget package in the House, with action on

Continued on Page 3

Unions face 'moral duty' to organize

By Muriel H. Cooper

The AFL-CIO is preparing to pull out all the stops in an effort to organize millions of new union members.

"The labor movement has a moral responsibility to offer every worker the opportunity to form a union," AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue and Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling said in their report to the 21st Constitutional Convention. "And we owe it to our current members, as well, to expand our ranks so they can improve their conditions and preserve their work."

The Executive Council report to the convention reflects on the problem of flagging membership, caused primarily by "changes in the nature of the work force and a brazen anti-union attitude among private-sector employers."

But this period also is a "time of tremendous organizing opportunity," the council reports. "American workers need unions now more than at any time since the 1930s. Unions have the ability to organize effectively on a large scale. There is a large corps of union members ready to fight."

Some unions, particularly in the service sector, have used aggressive new tactics to grow, restructuring their organizations, shifting resources and mobilizing the rank and file. "The challenge before us is to retool the entire labor movement," the council said.

"The AFL-CIO itself cannot do the critical, front-line organizing work. Organizing is something each union must do for itself, from the ground up," Donahue said. "What the federation can do is to help create the climate in which organizing can succeed and help our unions develop the tools needed to go about that job."

On his election by the Executive Council Aug. 1, Donahue declared that organizing was the federation's top priority. In his first weeks in office, he increased the budget of the AFL-CIO Organizing Institute and pledged to "produce 1,500 new organizers for our unions, and to turn the Organizing Institute and its graduates into the greatest force for unionization since the New Deal."

Continued on Page 9

NLRA at 60: Weakened law facing new attacks

By James B. Parks

The nation's basic labor law, designed to create workplace democracy, is not working and is in danger of being gutted by anti-union corporations and their Republican allies in Congress.

That's the consensus of labor leaders and scholars who marked the 60th anniversary of the Wagner Act and the National Labor Relations Board at a two-day conference in Washington sponsored by Cornell University and the NLRB.

Speakers pointed to a plethora of problems facing workers who want to form a union, including employers who illegally threaten employees throughout the campaign, replace striking workers and fire union sympathizers. Even if a violation of labor law is found, the legal process takes so long that the ruling is practically useless by the time it is rendered.

Elmer Chatak, president of the AFL-CIO's Industrial Union Department, cited IUD's latest study, "Insurmountable Obstacles," which shows that while U.S. employers fight against union recognition, competitors in other nations have been more successful with stronger labor movements and laws that recognize workers as equal partners.

Of all the industrialized countries, the United States has the smallest proportion of workers covered by collective bargaining contracts. In Europe, private-sector unionization ranges from 50 percent to 90 percent, compared with 15.5 percent in the United States, the IUD study reveals.

Despite this wide discrepancy, congressional Republicans are trying to gut what few parts of the law still protect workers' right to organize. Their attempts to use the appropriations process to "emasculate the NLRB" has made the right of employees to form a union and bargain collectively "more vulnerable now than at any time since the Wagner Act was passed," NLRB Chairman William B. Gould IV said.

"One of the critical underpinnings of a democratic industrial society in which labor and capital co-exist is thus threatened," Gould said. "And we should be clear about what is at stake."

Although recent studies show workers want to join unions when they are given the opportunity, the current law makes it hard to do, Chatak said. The Taft-Hartley amendments to the law "enabled employers to take aggressive action against unionization" and allowed them to "say anything they wanted" when employees tried to join a union, he said.

Employers Cook the process

The effort to organize a union at Cook Family Foods, a subsidiary of the conglomerate ConAgra, demonstrates just how poorly the law works. The Firemen and Oilers, which merged with the Service Employees this year, began the drive more than four years ago after Cook closed a union ham processing plant in Detroit and relocated a state-of-the-art plant in Carter County, Ky.

In April 1991, three months after the plant opened, workers contacted the union to complain of poverty wages, high insurance and safety equipment costs, horrible safety and health conditions with many unreported injuries, harsh rules and no bathroom policy.

The union won an NLRB election in September of that year by only a four-vote margin, with three ballots challenged. It took almost two years for the NLRB to certify the election, and then, in the summer of 1993, the company appealed the decision and refused to recognize the union. The NLRB almost immediately issued a complaint against the company for refusal to bargain.

Two months later, frustrated by Cook's repeated unfair labor practices, the workers walked out in a strike that would last for 17 months without a strike fund. During the strike, the employees were "permanently replaced" and had to face down numerous court injunctions and police harassment. Their union headquarters was shot up and company supervisors aimed rifles at the pickets.

Almost two years after the union was certified, a federal appeals court in February 1995 overturned the certification, disallowing the three challenged ballots. The same month, the Firemen and Oilers merged with SEIU.

Without a contract, 100 of the original 500 workers ended the strike, returned to work and started organizing again. The other workers had found other jobs or were fired. The company flooded the workers, many of them scabs and new hires, with anti-union movies, newspaper clippings and photos of damage allegedly caused by the strikers.

Four weeks before the scheduled election, the company pulled out all the stops, using "scare-and-bribe" tactics cooked up by the union-busting law firm it had hired. Some of the scare tactics were so blatant that security guards hired by Cook turned in their own boss, who later was arrested for soliciting persons to commit murder, arson or criminal mischief and blame it on the strikers.

Finally, four-and-a-half years after the first vote, the workers voted again, in overwhelming numbers (248-144) in favor of the union. And this time the company said it would not challenge the results.

The need for reform

No worker should have to endure that kind of abuse simply to exercise the legal right to join a union, Chatak said. To reform the process, he said, employers should not be allowed to participate in organizing campaigns and workers should be allowed to use card checks to authorize a union. He also said he would favor, reluctantly, a requirement for binding arbitration for first contracts.

Chatak called for a summit among "the many top industry leaders who have accepted collective bargaining and the leaders of America's unions . . . to see if there is a way we can convince the rest of the business community that it is in their best interests and America's best interests to permit their employees to form unions if they choose and to accept the principle of collective bargaining."

Gould strongly attacked the practice of replacing strikers, saying, "The ability to bargain constructively for the employees which they represent is essential for the very existence of trade unions. The increasing use of strike replacements . . . impairs the bargaining power of unions."

Reforming the labor laws, speakers warned, will require a massive grass-roots effort. "The only people who will convince our political leaders to change are those who vote them in, or more importantly, out of office," said MIT Professor Thomas Kochan, a member of the Dunlop Commission. "We've got to take these issues to the American workers."

Union 'salts' protected, U.S. argues

The Clinton administration and labor unions argued before the U.S. Supreme Court that federal law protects paid union staff who seek employment at a job site with the intention of helping the workers there form a union.

The tactic, known as "salting," is being tested in a case involving members of Electrical Workers Local 292 at a paper mill in International Falls, Minn. Of 10 union members who sought jobs at the nonunion project, only Malcom Hansen was hired.

The company, Town & Country Electric, a Wisconsin electrical contractor, fired Hansen, allegedly for talking too much. But the National Labor Relations Board ruled in December 1992 that Hansen was an "employee" under federal labor law and was entitled to the same work rules and protections against discrimination as other employees.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 8th Circuit overturned the ruling, saying employers do not violate the law by refusing to hire paid organizers or even rank-and-file members who plan to organize the job site.

In a brief filed on behalf of the local, the AFL-CIO argued that Hansen was fired illegally in an attempt to "exclude union members from employment . . . and eliminate any activism on behalf of the union from its work sites."

So long as a person performs work under the company's supervision in return for wages, he or she is an employee, the federation said. The idea advanced by the appeals court and management lawyers that being a paid union organizer breaches an employee's duty of loyalty to the employer "simply flies in the face" of the National Labor Relations Act, the unions said.

The whole purpose of the NLRA was to protect the right of employees to form a union, and there is no incompatibility between being a loyal employee and loyal union member, the AFL-CIO argued. The law also protects the rights of employees to be paid for legitimate union activity, which includes organizing, the brief added.

Even so, such employees must limit organizing efforts to lunch time, break time or after work, Deputy Solicitor General Lawrence G. Wallace argued. "Any paid union organizer . . . will still be subject to the employer's direction and control," he said.

The case, NLRB vs. Town & Country Electric Inc., was heard Oct. 10. The court did not indicate when it would make a ruling.

In another labor case, the court agreed to hear UFCW Local 751 vs. Brown Group and decide whether a union, on behalf of its members, may sue an employer that fails to give required notice of mass layoffs or plant closing under the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act.

The court also refused to hear a constitutional challenge to the targeted picketing law in San Jose, Calif. The law prohibits pickets within 300 feet of a "targeted residence." The law, which has been used as a model for similar ordinances throughout the state, applies to all forms of pickets, including labor picketing.

— James B. Parks

AFL-CIO NEWS

Director of Information: Rex Hardesty

Editor: Michael Byrne

Assistant Editors: David Kameras, Colleen M. O'Neill, James B. Parks

Staff Writers: Muriel H. Cooper, Mike Hall, Sharolyn A. Rosier

Graphics/Layout: Stan Hitt, Hindi M. Fracasse

AFL-CIO Press Secretary: Candice Johnson

AFL-CIO Headquarters: 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006
Telephone: (202) 637-5010 • CompuServe: 71112,53 • Internet: http://www.aflcio.org

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Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Senior citizens and their trade union allies hold a "candlelight" vigil on Capitol Hill Oct. 18 to urge the Congress to defeat enormous Republican-sponsored cuts in the Medicare program.

Medicare ads change minds

Continued from Page 1

that legislation tentatively set for the week of Oct. 23.

The Senate has kept both Medicare and Medicaid in its budget package, and is not planning to take action until the last week of October.

The AFL-CIO ads again feature Communications Worker Ron Collins, who appeared in ads run by the federation over the August recess. Collins notes that the Republican plan would cut Medicare by $270 billion and raise annual premiums for seniors by about $500 — all to give a $245 billion tax break to the wealthy.

Both the TV and radio ads encourage working families to use the AFL-CIO's toll-free number — 800/765-4440 — to call their congressional representative and make certain their voices are heard.

Besides the Stand UP ads, unions are working with senior coalitions in a number of other advertising campaigns to educate America's working families and seniors on the perils of the Medicare legislation. AFSCME developed ads for the Save America's Families Coalition that show how the Medicare cuts would force families to make painful choices.

Besides the Coalition to Save America's Families' $2 million TV ad campaign, the National Council of Senior Citizens has participated in rallies and hearings nationwide, including bringing a Trojan Horse to the Capitol to symbolize the Republican subterfuge on Medicare.

Thirteen seniors — including some NCSC members and some who were in their 90s — were arrested, handcuffed and hauled off to jail earlier this month for seeking to ask questions of lawmakers during a House hearing.

Others who have protested the Republican proposals include the American Association of Retired Persons, the American College of Physicians and the Corporate Health Care Coalition, a group of 25 large companies that provide health insurance benefits to workers and retirees.

The advertising is having no small effect, according to recent polls and media coverage. Increasing numbers of protesting voices were causing members of Congress to re-evaluate their positions, turning what once looked to be an easy vote in support of the Republican "Contract on America" into a much tougher vote against some of its most vulnerable citizens.

Because the Republican-led Congress is seeking to push far-reaching Medicare and Medicaid changes through the body without extensive debate, trade unionists and their allies have had to find alternate ways to reach the public concerning the dire consequences of those changes.

One such mechanism was a forum organized by Democratic senators Oct. 5. Another was a meeting convened Oct. 12 by Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich with 60 Washington-area seniors. Reich, one of three Cabinet members who is a trustee of the Medicare Trust Fund, called the gathering to hear first-hand from those most affected by the proposed cuts.

The Democratic leadership in Congress organized two events in the days leading up to the House vote — a candlelight vigil and a protest/rally. The vigil, held on the Capitol steps Oct. 18, spotlighted the tremendous cost of the legislation to citizens. The next day, picket signs sprouted on the east side of the Capitol to express outrage over the legislation and legislative methods used by the GOP.

Accounting change threatens pensions

Multiemployer pension, health and welfare plans are seeking relief from a rule that would create "artificial obligations" for the plans at a cost of tens of millions of dollars a year.

The Department of Labor's SOP 92-6 is a complicated process of placing a value on retiree health benefit obligations.

"This accounting rule would impose radical changes in the financial reporting requirements for multiemployer plans that increase even further already staggering health care costs," said Robert A. Georgine, president of the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department and chairman of the National Coordinating Committee for Multiemployer Plans.

"Creating artificial obligations is not fair to the working men and women who rely on these plans — or to the thousands of small businesses that offer these essential benefits to their employees," he said.

Georgine made his remarks to the NCCMP's Annual Fall Conference. The group represents more than 200 plans covering more than 9 million workers, retirees and their families; such plans are managed by an equal number of labor and management representatives. Most discussion at the conference focused on protecting multiemployer plans from unreasonable and misinformed legislative, regulatory and judicial action.

"The greatest threat to the stability of our plans is the idea that they should be taxed," Georgine said in the keynote address. "Taxing our members' health care benefits is double taxation in its worst form and it is reactionary social welfare policy.

"Though we look for common ground and face political realities," he said, "we will never abandon our principles. One principle that we will not forsake is that the government should not undercut union employers and union workers."

The head of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation told the conference he was reviewing the possibility of an increase in PBGC benefits for multiemployer plans. Martin I. Slate said multiemployer plans have dramatically lower PBGC premiums and benefit expenses than single-employer plans.

Over the past 10 years, he said, PBGC premiums for single-employer plans have risen greatly, while multiemployer premiums have remained stable.

— Colleen M. O'Neill

CAPITOL DIGEST

As the House neared a vote on budget reconciliation, moderate Republicans launched an effort to drop repeal of the Davis-Bacon Act and the Service Contract Act from the bill.

Both provisions originally were included in the House bill, but not in the version approved by the Senate.

In a letter to Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.), 27 Republican House members urged that Davis-Bacon repeal be stripped from the bill. Although many Republican House members support killing the prevailing wage law for federally funded construction, "We do not believe that reconciliation is the proper vehicle for dealing with this issue," they said. Davis-Bacon should be addressed in separate legislation, "which would provide for full and fair debate on the issue," they added.

Earlier in October, a House version of Davis-Bacon reform, backed by the AFL-CIO, was introduced. The bill, H.R. 2472, has 27 Republican co-sponsors, most of whom also signed the letter to Gingrich. It also has the support of many Democrats and of many major contractor groups.

Like its Senate counterpart, S. 1183, the legislation would continue to protect workers' wages, modernize the act and reduce the amount of paperwork for employers.

Meanwhile, the Senate Finance Committee put the finishing touches on the $245 billion tax cut portion of the reconciliation bill which, like the House version, delivers much of the benefit to big business and the wealthy.

If passed, the Republican-designed budget plan would force America's working families to pay higher costs for health care and education. Some would face higher taxes and others could see their pensions at risk.

Other major provisions in the reconciliation bill include:

- Massive cuts in Medicare and Medicaid (**See story, Page 1**).
- A $10 billion cut from guaranteed student loans.
- Opening up some pension funds to raids by corporations, the same kind of abuse that earmarked the 1980s.
- Forcing federal and postal retirees to pay more for fewer retirement benefits.
- Slashing the Earned Income Tax Credit, a program that gives small tax breaks to the working poor, in effect raising their taxes.

The AFL-CIO opposes the reconciliation bill and President Clinton has threatened to veto it unless major changes are made.

Elsewhere on Capitol Hill:

RAIL WORKERS — The Senate Commerce Committee reported a bill, S. 1318, opposed by the AFL-CIO, which would force Amtrak workers into binding arbitration over contract disputes. The bill also would limit labor protections and revoke some privately negotiated contracts between Amtrak and its employees. This bill may be folded into the reconciliation bill.

The House version of Amtrak authorization included some of the same provisions that were later removed. There will be an effort to amend this bill when it comes to the floor.

TIMBER POLICY — The Carpenters and Paperworkers hailed an Endangered Species Act (ESA) reform bill, H.R. 2275, approved by the House Resources Committee.

The bill "is a solid step toward improving and strengthening federal wildlife policy to allow for protection of people, their jobs and communities, along with plants and wildlife . . . Our members in Alaska and throughout the Pacific Northwest have suffered from the ill effects of an unbalanced ESA," said UPIU President Wayne Glenn.

Michael Draper, a member of the Carpenters executive board, said, "this bill contains the essential elements to protect wildlife while minimizing the human and social costs of species protection, such as those which have devastated working people and communities throughout the Pacific Northwest and Northern California."

— Mike Hall

OSHA proponents have their day on the Hill

Radical Ballenger bill may face a revision

By Colleen M. O'Neill

Lawmakers exposed to a litany of anti-OSHA rhetoric since Congress convened in January finally got to hear the other side of the story.

"Murder in the workplace is exempt from any real sanctions," noted Rep. Christopher Shays (R-Conn.), who sought to answer whether job safety and health laws should be made more stringent or lenient.

Shays, the chairman of the House Government Reform and Oversight subcommittee on human resources and intergovernmental relations, called a hearing Oct. 17 to give the Occupational Safety and Health Administration a chance to explain its reinvention activities.

OSHA Administrator Joseph A. Dear assured lawmakers the agency was bringing about change in its ranks.

"OSHA will alter its basic operating method from one of command and control to one that offers employers a real choice between partnership and traditional enforcement," Dear said.

He outlined key points of the agency's reinvention initiative, including the revision of its penalty policies, redesign of area offices and other streamlining.

The hearing took place in an atmosphere of uncertainty over the fate of H.R. 1834, the safety-gutting, health-busting OSHA measure put forth by Shays' fellow Republican House member, Cass Ballenger of North Carolina.

Ballenger's measure, introduced June 14, has yet to be brought up in his subcommittee for a vote. He reportedly is rewriting his bill to tone down some of the harsher aspects in an attempt to gain support from the more moderate wing of the Republican Party.

Ballenger held several hearings on his measure during the summer, with minimal input from opponents of his measure.

The AFL-CIO took on Ballenger and his bill with a series of radio and television advertisements that ran in Washington and in members' districts over the August congressional recess. Those spots featured Ronald Hayes, the father of a 19-year-old killed in a grain silo in Florida while following his supervisor's instructions. Also being planned is a week of activities in early November to lobby against H.R. 1834.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

USWA safety official Michael J. Wright reminds Congress of need to strengthen OSHA.

In addition, the New York City Central Labor Council is running a postcard campaign, while other local unions and CLCs are doing similar activities. Also, Rep. Major Owens (D-N.Y.) convened a people's hearing in Chapel Hill, N.C., in early October to discuss job safety and health.

Labor has worked for a strengthened OSHA for many years. Steelworkers Director of Health, Safety and Environment Michael J. Wright conveyed that to the panel during the Oct. 17 hearing, as he discussed the deaths of 35 USWA members in 1994.

"None of the accidents occurred because OSHA was too strong," he said. "Not a single worker died because the government was too tough, or inspected too often, or assessed too high a penalty, or set too many standards, or was not sufficiently cooperative with employers.

"On the contrary, they died because OSHA is too weak, because there are too few inspections, because there are too many serious, but unregulated, hazards in American workplaces and, fundamentally, because too many employers think they have little to fear from OSHA."

Wright cautioned that organized labor had not embraced all aspects of OSHA's reinvention program, but said "we fully support its stated goals — first, to better protect American workers on the job; second, and subordinate, to ease the burden of compliance for those employers who genuinely want to do a good job."

Wright went on to say that without a strong program of standards-setting and enforcement, coupled with an emphasis on worker rights, OSHA reinvention would be earmarked for failure.

Ballenger and his allies in Congress — such as Rep. Tom DeLay (R-Texas), who is continuing his fight against an ergonomics standard — have been seeking to turn OSHA from an enforcer of laws to a consultant on rules.

The appropriations measure passed by the House for fiscal year 1996 included a 33 percent cut in OSHA's enforcement budget and an overall budget cut of 15.5 percent for the agency. The Mine Safety and Health Agency took a smaller cut of 7.7 percent overall, while the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health — the only federal agency charged with doing job safety research — was cut by 25 percent.

The Senate moderated some of those cuts, and the appropriations process is far from over, but the intent of the Republican-led Congress to gut OSHA and make it more employer-friendly has been clear for months.

Wright made a clear case for opposition to a consultative, voluntary approach.

"I have spent most of my career trying to build voluntary, cooperative safety and health programs between workers and management," he said. "All my experience convinces me that the best incentives for such programs are mandatory standards and vigorous government enforcement.

"The best way to ensure that the programs work is to include workers and their representatives in their implementation."

Also testifying was James Hamilton from the Plumbers and Pipefitters.

JOB SAFETY

Mill fined $1.4 million

Oregon OSHA officials, citing the use and sales of a blasting material containing lead, cadmium and arsenic, have proposed a $1.4 million fine against Oregon Steel Mills, Inc.

It was the largest fine ever assessed by Oregon OSHA, which said exploding the material — called Durablast — could expose workers to five times to 99 times the permissible exposure limit for lead and two times to 16 times the PEL for cadmium.

The company originally developed the material — composed of waste byproducts from steel manufacturing — as roofing material, but began marketing it as an abrasive blasting material in 1993.

$8 million fine proposed

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has set an $8.2 million penalty for a Guam steel erector accused of violating the agency's fall protection standards.

The proposed penalty against Samsung Guam Inc. was the largest ever against a construction employer and the second-largest penalty ever, the agency said.

OSHA cited the company for 118 alleged egregious willful violations for failing to protect workers against fall hazards ranging up to 85 feet. The citations followed an investigation of the death of a South Korean welder.

Training grants set

OSHA has granted $1.63 million for training to 17 nonprofit groups to help employers and employees reduce workplace injuries and illnesses.

Among those receiving grants are the Food and Commercial Workers, New York State Public Employees Federation, UAW, York (Pa.) Area Labor-Management Council, Carpenters Health and Safety Fund and the Roofers and Waterproofers Research and Education Joint Trust Fund.

Case shows need for ergonomics rule

The Service Employees are seeking an appeal of a judicial decision striking ergonomics citations against a nursing home chain.

Because the Occupational Safety and Health Administration does not have a specific standard covering ergonomics, the agency cited five Beverly Enterprises Inc. facilities for unsafe lifting practices under the general duty clause.

An administrative law judge of the Occupational Safety Review Commission ruled Sept. 22 that Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich failed to show a significant risk of harm existed and vacated the citations.

SEIU represents about 75,000 nursing home workers in approximately 1,000 facilities. The Food and Commercial Workers also represent workers at a number of Beverly homes. Organizing campaigns by both unions have uncovered major health problems relating to the lifting of patients.

"Nursing home workers provide almost all of the direct care to patients, assisting patients with all activities of daily living, such as transferring them to the shower or toilet, feeding, etc.," noted Jamie Cohen, assistant director of SEIU's health and safety department.

"The industry pays out nearly $1 billion annually in workers' compensation costs," she said. "You cannot separate worker health and safety from patient care industries.

"When an employer provides a safe workplace, it means workers are able to provide the best quality care for residents," Cohen said.

Twelve nursing home facilities in Pennsylvania were cited between 1990 and 1992 for ergonomic hazards related to unsafe lifting. Another chain settled with the government and already has implemented a back-injury prevention program, Cohen said, while OSHA also reached settlement with other non-profit, independent facilities.

Beverly-operated nursing homes are not strangers to controversy. In July 1995, a National Labor Relations Board ALJ recommended that a corporatewide cease-and-desist order be issued against Beverly for unfair labor practices concerning its attempt to resist being organized. That ruling was just the latest in a series of similar decisions dating back to the early 1990s.

In addition, a January 1995 AFL-CIO Food and Allied Service Trades Department study uncovered a "woeful pattern of poor (patient) care" in Beverly homes, while state officials in Alabama uncovered numerous deficiencies in 1994 in one of the chain's facilities in Anniston.

"Caring Till It Hurts," a guide to nursing home work and workers, was released by SEIU this past March. The report showed that nursing homes in the past decade have outstripped construction, mining and trucking in the dangers presented to workers. Back injuries are the most common type of injury, according to the study, accounting for 43 percent of all injuries in nursing homes.

"We feel that OSHA has an important and critical role to play in the health care industry, and in particular in the nursing home industry," SEIU's Cohen said. "It's clear where OSHA has had effective enforcement programs, such as in manufacturing and construction, injury rates have gone down.

"This ALJ decision is an important issue because nursing home workers are dealing with what is fast becoming the most hazardous industry," she said.

"This decision is important, but not precedent-setting. It is one decision on five nursing homes," Cohen said. "It is inconsistent with the Pepperidge Farm case decided by another ALJ, who found lifting did cause injury."

The SEIU report "Caring Till It Hurts" advocated the promulgation of an ergonomics standard, including work site analysis to identify risk factors that cause injuries, a method to reduce those factors, early treatment programs for injured workers and preventive injury training.

— Colleen M. O'Neill

Economists urge Congress to raise minimum wage

By David Kameras

More than a hundred leading economists, including three Nobel Prize winners, have called for an increase in the federal minimum wage, rejecting arguments by Republicans in Congress that the Clinton administration's proposed increase would result in a sizable loss of jobs.

"We believe that the federal minimum wage can be increased by a moderate amount without significantly jeopardizing employment opportunities," they said in a statement released jointly by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and the Economic Policy Institute.

"Specifically, the proposed increase in the minimum wage of 90 cents over a two-year period falls within the range of alternatives where the overall effects on the labor market, affected workers and the economy would be positive," the economists argued.

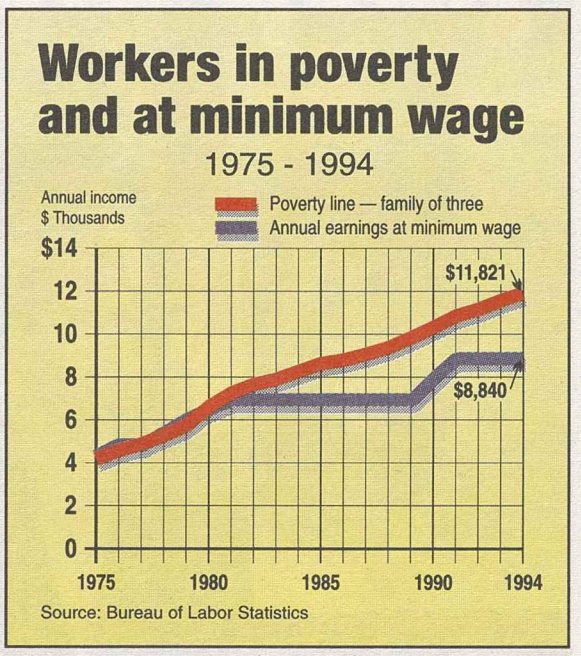
Among the economists signing the statement were former Nobelists Kenneth J. Arrow of Stanford University, Lawrence R. Klein of the University of Pennsylvania and James Tobin of Yale.

Raising the minimum wage would help ameliorate the trend that since the early 1970s has seen the benefits of economic growth unevenly distributed among workers, the economists said. Further, economic studies suggest that the effects of a higher minimum wage on employment and inflation would be negligible or small.

The minimum wage was last increased in April 1991, when the second of two 45-cent steps brought the rate to $4.25 an hour. Some Republicans, including House Majority Leader Richard K. Armey (Texas), have called for eliminating the wage floor altogether.

White House Press Secretary Mike McCurry characterized the minimum wage increase proposal as "necessary, urgent, but so far, not going much of anywhere in the Congress. We continue to press it."

While Congress dithers, the wage rate effectively shrinks. In their statement, the economists noted that "after adjusting for inflation, the value of the minimum wage is at its second-lowest annual level since 1955. The purchasing power of the minimum wage is 26 percent below its average level during the 1970s" and reached its lowest level just before the last increase in 1991.



Despite the shrinking purchasing power of the minimum wage, key members of Congress are seeking to squeeze low-income workers even further. Instead of trying to boost the disposable income of poorer Americans, Senate Finance Committee Chairman William Roth (R-Del.) has proposed reducing the Earned Income Tax Credit by $32 billion over seven years and raising $8 billion in revenues by knocking people off the qualification rolls.

Many states are considering raising their own wage floors. Legislation to increase the state minimum wage is pending in California, Delaware and New York, and Idaho and Montana have petitions circulating to place the issue on the ballot.

Massachusetts passed a bill to raise the minimum wage by $1 over two years, but it drew a veto Oct. 17 from Gov. William Weld (R). State AFL-CIO President Joseph Faherty pledged to work hard with labor's friends in the House and Senate, predicting "we will override his veto — that's a guarantee."

"The minimum wage is an important component of the set of policies to help low-wage workers," the economists said. "It has key advantages, including that it produces positive work incentives and is administratively simple. For these and other reasons, such as its exceptionally low value today, there should be greater reliance on the minimum wage to support the earnings of low-wage workers."

Arizona unionists push referendum

If more government responsibility is going to shift to the states, the Arizona AFL-CIO plans to be armed and ready to protect worker issues.

The state federation has launched a petition campaign, a statewide "Workers' Bill of Rights" ballot initiative, that calls for changes in unemployment benefits, workers' compensation, minimum wage and freedom of association.

Arizona AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Charles R. Huggins said he is optimistic the federation will be able to gather the necessary 170,000 signatures by July 3, 1996, and get the initiative on the ballot for next November.

More than 200 local affiliates will be involved in the signature drive, he said.

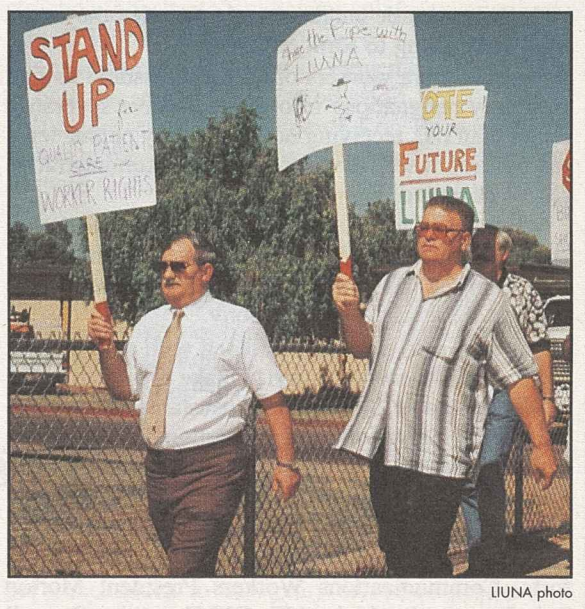
While "all the initiative's provisions are very important," Huggins said, unemployment insurance was the No. 1 concern and minimum wage second in a poll of union members.

The initiative seeks to make jobless benefits equal to at least half the previous wage — up to 67 percent of the state average wage. Disqualification from benefits would be limited to no more than six weeks, with no reduction or cancellation of benefit rights.

A minimum-wage provision would entitle workers to 50 percent of the state's average hourly wage. If that were in effect now, the minimum wage would be $5.84, Huggins said.

The workers' comp benefit would pay 75 percent of the pre-injury wages. Workers also would have a choice of physicians, be covered for occupational illnesses for the first time and without the current state cap of $323 a week.

The amendment also would give workers the right of freedom of association and actual right of contract, issues on which the state constitution now remains silent, Huggins said, and discharges would be limited to just cause.



LIUNA photo

Laborers Vice President Chuck Barnes and organizer Richard Maki joined American Indian Movement representatives outside the Phoenix Indian Medical Center in a protest against proposed Republican congressional cuts for Indian health services.

In addition, under the proposed amendment, workers would be guaranteed job training, health care and other benefits at the expense of any employer that moves out of the state within 10 years after having received funding to bring business to Arizona. The company also would have to repay the amount of economic development incentives received from any Arizona governmental jurisdiction.

"The goal is to have economic development monies returned and put toward displaced employees' benefits," said Huggins.

— Sharolyn A. Rosier

U.S. will shift job training task to states

By Muriel H. Cooper

The AFL-CIO won a fight to leave intact federal training programs for workers displaced by U.S. trade policies, but the Senate voted to turn the bulk of job training programs over to the states.

The block grant system, passed Oct. 11 by a 95-2 vote, will require the states to create and manage their own work force development programs. The House earlier had passed its version of the bill, 345-79. No date has been set for the measure to go before a conference committee.

Through an intense lobbying effort by the federation, the bill retains as separate national programs regular Trade Adjustment Assistance and the North American Free Trade Agreement-TAA program, as well as the Job Corps.

"We consider it an important victory that we were able to retain the TAA and NAFTA-TAA separate from the block grant," said Bill Cunningham, AFL-CIO legislative representative. "And we also were able to make other improvements to the legislation."

Cunningham cited provisions that give vouchers to adult dislocated workers on a priority basis, and an amendment by Christopher Dodd (D-Conn.) to keep 2.7 percent of total job training funding at the national level.

"However, we have serious reservations about block-granting federal job training programs," said AFL-CIO Legislative Director Peggy Taylor. "The bill eliminates national performance standards and accountability and significantly decreases funding."

S. 143, the Workforce Development Act, will shift more than 80 federal training and education programs into four block grants to be administrated by the states as of July 1, 1998.

Funding for these programs has been cut about 15 percent. The Senate also cut the Labor Department's staff for running many of those programs by at least one-third.

The Clinton administration said the planned one-stop training centers are "steps in the right direction," but Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich deplored the proposed cuts to education and job training programs.

He questioned whether the bill was adequate to "move people from the old economy to the new economy."

Governors will have greater latitude in allocating funds. Programs that once were targeted to serve specific workers — the poor, dislocated and unemployed — now will be left up to the governors and local area administrators.

Job training likely will suffer under the block grant concept, said AFL-CIO economist Markley Roberts. "Many of these job and training programs were set up because the states were not looking into them. The governors probably like the idea of having more control, but groups without much political clout will get less shrift or no shrift at all."

The legislation leaves intact the states' employment offices. Traditionally these offices, funded through a dedicated tax from employers, are the sites of "labor exchanges," including potential job leads and the Unemployment Compensation work test to determine eligibility for unemployment payments.

However, it is still unclear if these facilities will offer the same services, much to the chagrin of AFSCME and the Service Employees.

"The bill is a substantial improvement over the original version, but it does permit privatization function and we are opposed to that," said Nanine Meiklejohn, a legislative assistant at AFSCME.

Overall, the bill could weaken labor's voice in the job training field, where unions have excelled over the years. Historically, labor has been the catalyst for developing apprenticeship programs, investing in workplace change and designing training programs.

The AFL-CIO's Human Resources Development Institute link has successfully worked with labor representatives across the country in administering and designing work force training sessions.

"This whole business of block grants puts more responsibility on state government, state federations and central labor councils," said Roberts. "I see state feds as having to make sure that people that are supposed to get benefits not only receive them but maintain the level of services they need."

Reich pledges fight against child labor



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa), holding a glass made by young children, joined Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich in unveiling a new U.S. study on the international problem of child labor.

By Muriel H. Cooper

Despite worldwide efforts to monitor child labor, millions of children still are working illegally in dangerous conditions, exploited as laborers and slaves, the Labor Department reported.

Unveiling the department's second report on child labor, Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich said the administration would insist that "the child labor criteria under the Generalized System of Preferences is fully applied." Under GSP, nations could lose duty-free access to the U.S. market if they violate trade rules, including worker rights.



Kailash Satyarthi

The DoL report, "By the Sweat and Toil of Children: The Use of Child Labor in U.S. Agricultural Imports and Forced and Bonded Child Labor," identifies a number of countries and industries where kids have been reported either to be working in commercial agriculture or as forced or bonded laborers.

"This report is not about children working after school, or maybe in the family business," said Reich, appearing with Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa), who had requested the report. "It is about children forced to work beyond their physical capacity in dangerous working conditions, often earning only a fraction of an adult's pay — if they earn anything at all. Far from learning legitimate trades or skills, these children are denied even a basic education."

Harkin, whose Child Labor Deterrence Act would prohibit the importation of products made by child labor, said he considered the report a "catalog of abuses on children forced to work as slaves. And it's a catalog of the products that they are forced to make."

The children weave carpets, mine gold and help with fishing operations. Some are forced to work as domestic servants and prostitutes. They harvest cocoa, coffee, coconuts, cotton, fruit and vegetables, sugar cane, tea and tobacco under harsh conditions for long hours and subminimum wages.

Harkin said consumers should ask themselves if they can afford the price that children pay just so they can have these products.

"Our laws prohibit the importation of ivory. Our laws prohibit the importation of endangered species such as the spotted turtle. Our laws prohibit products made from prison labor. But our laws fail to outlaw products that are made by exploiting children," he said.

Also appearing at the press conference was Kailash Satyarthi, chair of the South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude, who praised the campaign by the union-backed Child Labor Coalition that uses a RUGMARK to ensure that oriental carpets are made without child labor.

"You have a greater responsibility and task to put pressure on U.S. outlets so that they will import carpets with the RUGMARK emblem," said Satyarthi, who has conducted several raids on factories in Asia to free child workers.

Satyarthi "has been an outspoken advocate for an end to child bonded labor," who has put himself at risk in his effort to free children, said CLC co-Chair Linda Golodner.

Copies of the DoL report may be obtained by contacting the International Child Labor Study Group, Bureau of National Affairs, U.S. Department of Labor, Room S-1308, 200 Constitution Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20210, 202/208-4843 or FAX 202/219-4923.

Mexican workers suffer as Zedillo, glitterati toast to NAFTA

By David Kameras

Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo's October visit to Washington, with the White House and the World Bank among the glittering stops, failed to camouflage the misery suffered by his people in the wake of the peso's collapse and implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

"Democracy means that government must represent the will of the people, and not the will of a handful of wealthy people," said Jaime Martinez, secretary-treasurer of Electronic Workers District 11 and president of a coalition formed after January's popular uprising in Chiapas. "Democracy is more than the right to vote, it is the right to decide what happens to the economy," he said.

"I look forward to the time when Mexican people will have true democracy, true worker rights and fair, clean elections," Martinez told the Zapatista National Rally held in Lafayette Park across from the White House.

With labor laws unenforced by a government that works in collusion with officially sanctioned labor unions, Mexican workers have little voice or power over their workplace. Multinational companies have been willing partners in this marriage of convenience.

That was the case for workers at a Kirkwood Co. maquiladora plant, who were dissatisfied with their management-chosen COCEM union representatives and asked the Authentic Workers Front (FAT) for help. But when workers showed up to vote in the subsequent election, they were met by 50 men from COCEM armed with clubs and metal bars.

Earlier, workers had been sent into a closed room to individually declare their affiliation preference before union officials and company owners, and 80 percent of those seeking recognition for an independent union were fired prior to the vote.

Not surprisingly, COCEM won. The fired workers had to choose between accepting severance pay or engaging in protracted legal battles to gain reinstatement. Most chose the former.

The Mexican government has twice denied legal status to an independent union representing workers at a Sony plant in Nuevo Laredo, saying that two founding union workers no longer work there. Lost in the bureaucratic language is the fact that they were fired after trying to form the union.

"Maquiladora workers often feel pressured to sign voluntary resignations in order to receive severance rather than risk receiving nothing if they pursue legal redress and lose," the U.S. National Administrative Office observed.

While the Mexican government has agreed to a "joint work program" and meetings with those involved in the case, many doubt whether these steps will restore worker rights at Sony.

The lack of rights has combined with a 50 percent increase in the cost of living to make life south of the border miserable, and at times unsustainable. According to the Salvador Zubiran National Institute on Nutrition, Mexico has the highest infant mortality rate of any country not at war, with 80 infants dying of malnutrition every day.

U.S. unions have been assisting in organizing efforts. Communications Workers President Morton Bahr last month told the AFL-CIO Executive Council of his union's first cross-border organizer training, bringing together 15 organizers each from CWA and the Mexican Telephone Workers Union (STRM).

"Everyone was very excited to enable (the Mexicans) to negotiate with U.S. companies coming into Mexico," he said, adding that the program, co-sponsored by STRM in cooperation with the American Institute for Free Labor Development, will be expanded to include family stays in both countries and training at the George Meany Center for Labor Studies.

"Workers must mobilize across borders to leverage union strength and preserve their standard of living," Bahr said.

"Without greater cooperation among employees, companies would be able to shift production to any nonunion setting with impunity," said CWA Organizing Director Larry Cohen. "Mexican trade unionists are facing the privatization of their telecommunications system, and want to make sure the new ventures don't undercut the wages and working conditions of our members on both sides of the border."

The AFL-CIO Ad Hoc Committee on International Solidarity and Organizing was established in 1994 to facilitate the work of U.S. unions with their counterparts abroad. It is chaired by UNITE! President Jay Mazur, whose union has assisted programs in Honduras and the Dominican Republic.

The gross disparity in the hemisphere's living conditions ultimately hurts workers north of the border as well, as U.S. companies accelerate their rush to Mexico's vast, cheap labor market.

Ertl Co., a manufacturer of toy model kits, is laying off 300 Iowa workers and moving their work to Tijuana. Faced with the severe recession in Mexico, the Goodyear Tire and Rubber plant in Tultitlan is coping by aggressively boosting exports to the United States, at the cost of U.S. jobs.

NAFTA has been blamed by Canadian analysts for creating a "jobless recovery" in that country.

"The Mexican economy contracted 10.5 percent in the second quarter of this year," noted Greg Woodhead, an economist with the AFL-CIO Task Force on Trade. "A boon for Mexico's biggest industrial exporters has not brought benefits to the majority of Mexican workers — and has a negative impact on job security and wages of U.S. workers."

Nonetheless, many Republicans in Congress seem determined to expand free trade coverage to Chile and elsewhere in the hemisphere, while blocking even NAFTA's weak labor provisions from future agreements, as reflected in a "fast-track" bill passed by the House Ways and Means Committee in September.

"Many promises of benefits from NAFTA were made to secure its adoption by Congress," Woodhead said. "Eighteen months under the agreement have been disappointing. Any attempts to expand the trade agreement should proceed with caution and should include an objective study of this flawed agreement."



BAC photo

Vice President Gore admires the Bricklayers' Golden Trowel Award, which was presented to him by BAC President John T. Joyce, elected by the delegates to a fourth five-year term.

Bricklayers pick Joyce, Flynn

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

The Bricklayers celebrated 130 years of unionized masonry with a Chicago convention that included a gigantic craft fair, touted as the world's largest exhibit of masonry skills, products and information.

The convention also re-elected President John T. Joyce to a fourth five-year term by a narrow margin of 45,115 votes to 43,120 votes for L. Gerald Carlisle, the union's secretary-treasurer. Joyce urged the delegates to channel their fighting spirit into work for union members.

The fair covered more than three acres in a city block in the heart of Chicago's Loop. More than 40 manufacturers, suppliers and trade associations participated. Chicago is the hometown of Joyce, who has been president of the union since 1979.

"We have been innovative and bold and we shall continue to be," he told the delegates. "Our members always had a voice to speak as loudly or as softly as they choose. The job is to tangibly link the voice of our members with the actions of our union."

John J. Flynn, one of the union's executive vice presidents, was elected secretary-treasurer to succeed Carlisle. Frank Stupar, James Boland and Mike Carlander were elected executive vice presidents.

AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue hailed the union's 130-year tradition of fighting for workers' interests.

"This union has survived through six generations of war and peace, of economic booms and busts, through all kinds of technological change, and through dozens of presidents in this country and prime ministers in Canada," he said. "With that record, you are definitely going to survive Newt Gingrich."

Donahue vowed that labor "can stand together against the right-wingers in the Congress."

Vice President Al Gore, who received the union's Golden Trowel Award, thanked the Bricklayers for their help in the struggle against Republican assaults on workers. But "the battle continues," he said, urging delegates to fight for a budget that doesn't reek of injustice and havoc.

Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) pointed out that the first labor bill considered by Republicans was repeal of the Davis-Bacon Act, which was "a declaration of war on bricklayers and other construction workers. It's time to take a stand . . . And say, no way, no way, no way."

Reiterating the importance of organizing and solidarity in the labor movement, AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department President Robert A. Georgine said, "The time is now to organize and be counted. Workers, especially in the construction industry, have seen falling wages and benefits. It's up to us to stand up for the workers."

New Carpenters President Doug McCarron told the convention that the cutthroat competition of the construction industry today dictates solidarity among unions. "We have nothing to gain by staying at odds, and everything to gain by respecting the independence of both our unions," McCarron said.

U.S. Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown cut the ribbon at the craft fair during the grand opening. Sen. Richard G. Lugar (R-Ind.) and Mayor Richard Daley (D) were also in attendance. The fair was sponsored by the union's International Masonry Institute.

Delegates also participated in workshops on health and safety, retirement, organizing and steward training.

Other speakers included Plasterers and Cement Masons President Dominic Martell and Asbestos Workers President William G. Bernard.

IBT foils carhaulers' double-breasting

The Teamsters reached a tentative agreement that suspends a 32-day strike and returns 5,000 carhaul drivers, dockworkers and mechanics to work.

IBT President Ron Carey said the four-year proposed contract, reached Oct. 8, "is a major victory for our members" that would counter pervasive attempts at double-breasting and enhance job security.

"The proposed contract will prevent Ryder and other companies from using non-Teamster subsidiaries to undermine job security in the carhaul industry the way the freight companies did during the 1980s," Carey said.

In addition, a two-tier wage plan is scrapped in favor of hourly wage increases totalling $1.35 for non-drivers over the contract's life, an improved mileage formula for calculating drivers' compensation, and pension and health benefits that will see the largest increase in contributions ever. Improvements in grievance procedures also are included.

A ratification vote by the more than 12,000 affected unionists will take place over the next several weeks.

The walkout followed nine months of fruitless negotiations, during which management demanded labor concessions to cap years of record profits and rising productivity.

Although the old contract expired in May, the Teamsters waited until Sept. 7 to call a selective strike against three companies owned by Ryder Automotive Carrier Group, which as the nation's largest auto carrier commands a third of the market. By timing the strike for the start of the new model year, the union effectively shut down much of the distribution network serving dealers, blocked the delivery of half a million cars and cost the company $1 million a day.

The result was that some dealers became de facto, if not always sympathetic, allies in bringing pressure to bear for an early settlement.

"We didn't pick this fight," Carey said. "But once we were forced into it, we showed this country that the Teamsters union is ready to stand up for good, secure jobs — and to do it with a smart strategy that will work."

— David Kameras

Guild affirms CWA merger, elects Foley

By Colleen M. O'Neill

The Information Age has taken on new meaning for two unions preparing to become one.

Newspaper Guild members overwhelmingly approved a proposed merger with the Communications Workers during voting last month, setting in motion a two-year process that will lead to TNG becoming a separate sector of CWA.

The Guild also elected new officers, with Linda K. Foley moving up from secretary-treasurer to president, succeeding Charles Dale, who retired. Bernie Lunzer was elected to succeed Foley as secretary-treasurer.



Linda Foley

Merger was a major part of a four-year strategic plan adopted by the TNG convention in 1993. The proposal to merge with CWA was recommended unanimously by the union's executive board in April and adopted by voice vote of 238 delegates to TNG's 1995 convention in June.

The merger marks the latest step for CWA, which began in 1938 as the National Federation of Telephone Workers, toward fulfilling its billing as "A Union for The Information Age."

In 1987, the 70,000-member International Typographical Union, America's oldest labor union, merged with CWA. That was followed in 1994 by the affiliation of the Broadcast Employees and Technicians, representing more than 10,000 television industry workers. They now are the CWA Broadcast and Cable Television Workers Sector.

The Newspaper Guild's storied history began on Aug. 7, 1933, when famed columnist Heywood Broun declared, "The fact that newspaper editors and owners are genial folk should hardly stand in the way of the organization of a newspaper writers' union." TNG was born Dec. 15 that year and Broun became its first president.

With the advent of computer networks, instantaneous worldwide communication is possible. As outlets expand for information, the need for those to deliver the product will remain strong.

"We intend for CWA members to construct and maintain the Information Superhighway," said CWA President Morton Bahr. "We are rapidly moving into a single information industry, speeded along by the convergence of telecommunications, the print and broadcast media, cable TV and entertainment.

"The overwhelming vote by Guild members to merge our two unions is a major step for the workers who will make that vision a reality," he said.

TNG members approved the merger proposal by a 92 percent margin. In other election results, Foley defeated New York Guild President Barry Lipton by a vote of 5,832 to 2,892. Lunzer, the Twin Cities Guild executive secretary, defeated TNG Region 4 Vice President Larry D. Hatfield of the Northern California Guild by a vote of 4,523 to 3,880.

Five vice presidents at large also were elected: Connie Knox, Carol Przybyszewski, Percy Hatfield, Lesley Philips and Eugene Jones. Akron Guild Treasurer Jane Snow won an open seat for Region 3 vice president.

The merger process formally began Oct. 17 with a TNG Executive Board meeting, and will continue through the efforts of a TNG transition team to study the necessary constitutional changes.

During the affiliation period, a TNG spokesman said, the Guild will begin per capita payments to CWA.

The merger will become effective after the next TNG convention in June 1997. At that time, the 35,000-member TNG will become a sector in the 600,000-member CWA and the TNG president will become a CWA vice president.

The merger agreement also calls for the creation of TNG Canada, an autonomous organization of TNG locals that will retain ties to the U.S. union.



Photos by Daymon J. Hartley/The Detroit Journal

A billboard dramatically shows the vicious attacks on Detroit newspaper strikers with a photograph of a Sterling Heights police officer kicking striking pressman Frank Brabanec.

Detroit strike squeezes profits

By James B. Parks

The three-month strike by Detroit newspaper workers is taking a big toll on the newspapers' bottom line and its public support, causing both circulation and advertising to fall by at least a quarter.

Knight-Ridder and Gannett, owners of the Free Press and News, respectively, have admitted that the strike resulted in a $46 million loss in revenue, a 24 percent drop in circulation and a 20 percent to 30 percent decline in advertising.

"It's quite clear the papers miscalculated," said Roger Kerson, spokesman for the Metropolitan Council of Newspaper Unions, which represents the strikers. "Any business that loses one of four customers and one of four advertisers has got to be hurting. It's true Gannett and Knight-Ridder have deep pockets, but this has to hurt their business."

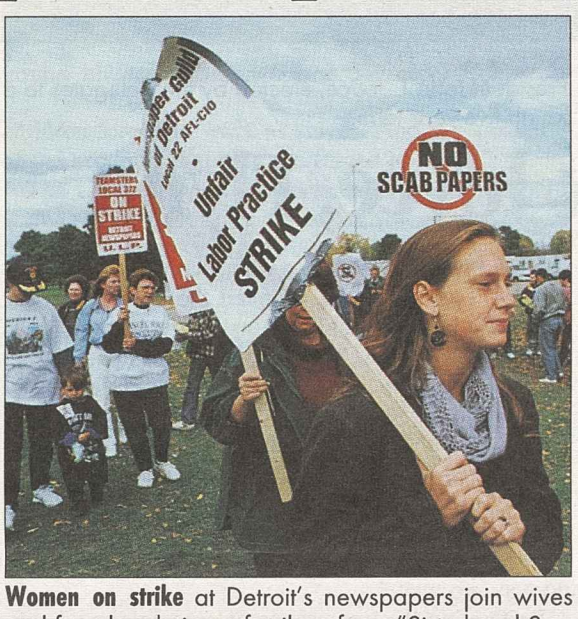
The circulation figures, as bad as they are, are probably "phony" and in reality are worse than the papers will admit, Kerson said. "There are a lot of people who have canceled their subscriptions and are still receiving papers," Kerson said, even some with "No Scab Papers Here" signs in their lawns.

The problem of piled up, unopened papers on lawns has prompted the city of Ypsilanti, Mich., to announce it will give littering citations to any carrier that delivers a paper to a house where the subscription has been canceled.

Community support for the strikers is growing almost as fast as the backing for the newspapers dwindles. The striking unions accepted a unanimous call by the Detroit City Council, Mayor Dennis Archer and Sterling Heights Mayor Richard Notte for round-the-clock negotiations to settle the strike.

"Our union coalition is prepared to do the right thing by joining such talks immediately," said Lou Mleczko, president of The Newspaper Guild Local 22. "Now it's up to the Detroit newspapers to listen to the concerns of their workers and this community, and join with us to resolve this strike as soon as possible."

The newspapers also have not formally responded to the unions' statement of principles for ending the strike, although their public comments have been negative.



Women on strike at Detroit's newspapers join wives and female relatives of strikers for a "Sisterhood Sunday" rally in Sterling Heights.

Union solidarity with the workers remains strong, Kerson said. AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue assigned seven staff to assist the strikers. Among the many unions providing support are the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees, which is running a phone bank to help the strikers' ad and circulation campaigns.

The Detroit AFT donated $10,000 to help the strikers, while the Seafarers assigned a staff member to assist in strike support activities.

Both the SIU and UAW have provided picketers. In addition, the UAW has been very active in the ad and circulation campaigns and in picketing newspaper distribution centers.

The strike has caused the newspapers to lose support from some Detroit businesses and community groups, including the Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce and the local United Way.

IAM set for long Boeing walkout

Striking Machinists have shut down Boeing's massive airplane production system and are digging in for a long strike.

The union has set up services to assist the 32,500 strikers, including job referrals and help with food, clothing, housing, insurance and child care, said union spokesman Matt Bates.

Solidarity remains high, even among nonunion Boeing employees. In Wichita, Kan., a "right-to-work" state, some 1,800 of 2,200 nonunion workers are honoring the picket line and 189 have joined the union during the strike, said Ron Eldridge, directing business representative for IAM District 70.

IAM President George J. Kourpias joined the picket lines Oct. 6-7 and told strikers they are fighting to save the U.S. aerospace industry. "If America keeps shipping jobs and technologies overseas, we will lose the aerospace industry — 500,000 jobs and $129 billion in sales by 2013 — and we can't afford to do that. We need national policies to respond to international competition in ways that strengthen domestic production," he said.

The union also filed an unfair labor practice complaint with the National Labor Relations Board. The complaint alleges that Boeing negotiated in bad faith by presenting new health care proposals in the last stages of negotiations. The sudden action prevented the union from fully evaluating the proposals and offering "informed counterproposals," the complaint said.

Boeing is threatening to retroactively cut the health care benefits of employees who took early retirement, some 2,300 in 1995 alone. The retirees were promised medical benefits until they reached age 65, when they would become eligible for regular retirement.

Now the company wants to retroactively triple deductibles and double out-of-pocket expenses, Bates said. Although the issue is not part of the collective bargaining agreement, it has angered both the retirees and the strikers. The retirees may file a class-action suit to stop the changes, he said.

Some 32,500 Machinists in three states walked out at the Boeing Co. Oct. 5 after overwhelmingly rejecting the company's latest contract offer. No new talks are scheduled, Bates said.

CLUW prepares to mobilize for 1996 vote

Women's voice called key to saving worker rights

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

Employing the themes of power, politics and participation, delegates to the Coalition of Labor Union Women's eighth biennial convention began mobilizing for the 1996 elections.

"What these folks in Congress are doing isn't about balancing the budget; it's about putting more money in the pockets of those who already have enough," CLUW President Gloria Johnson told the delegates meeting in Dearborn, Mich. "Historic gains in areas such as affirmative action, pay equity, job safety and health care are under attack by the Republican-controlled Congress."

Johnson, an AFL-CIO vice president and vice president of the Electronic Workers, noted that most working women are disadvantaged, and that less than 12 percent of them are organized.

Thus, it falls to union leaders to turn the tide by mobilizing women to vote to preserve such protections as the right to organize, Johnson declared.

"I don't know who the GOP hates more — strong independent women or strong independent unionists," AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling told the delegates. "What I do know is that they want to destroy us all."

Union activism pays off across the board, Easterling said, as union women earn 12 percent more than nonunion women.

To regain the labor movement's fervor and political power, delegates were urged by AFSCME Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson to "reach out to women, people of color, to people born into another language, to new workers."

"If we are going to rid Congress of Gingrich and all that he stands for . . . labor councils and allied groups have to be given the ammunition they need to make their fight," said Chavez-Thompson, a candidate for the proposed position of AFL-CIO executive vice president.

Also addressing the gathering, held Oct. 12-15, was Building and Construction Trades Department President Robert A. Georgine, who noted the entrance of record numbers of women into such nontraditional occupations as construction.

"In the last decade, the number of women construction apprentices has risen from 2 percent to 9 percent," he said. "Most of that increase occurred in the last three years."

However, juggling work and family continues to be a problem. "We need work schedules that do not make us strangers to our families," said Tipper Gore, wife of Vice President Gore.

UAW President Stephen Yokich also addressed the gathering, saying union members must remember that organized labor is a social movement that wields formidable political clout, and is not just a collective bargaining agent for wages and benefits.

In support of the "Come Shop with Me" campaign, delegates participated in a rally to educate American consumers about the huge price differences between what consumers pay for products and what the workers who make those products earn.

"When shoppers choose American goods and products, they know their money is being spent to support the wages and standards of U.S. workers, preserving domestic manufacturing opportunities for tomorrow," said Johnson.

Following the rally, trade unionists distributed informational materials at a local shopping mall.

CLUW, along with the A. Philip Randolph Institute, also issued statements supporting the striking Detroit newspaper workers.

Delegates also participated in numerous workshops, including those on affirmative action, violence against women, health care and women and HIV/AIDS.

Other speakers included Rep. Barbara-Rose Collins (D-Mich.); Maryann Mahaffey, president of the Detroit City Council; Norman Hill, president of APRI; and Eleanor Smeal, president of the Fund for the Feminist Majority.

BARGAINING

Navistar, UAW agree

UAW members ratified a new three-year contract with Navistar International Corp. that retains the current wage scheme and increases health care benefits.

Under the agreement, Navistar will continue to make annual 3 percent lump-sum payments to employees in lieu of a pay raise. The company will retain up to 62 cents an hour of cost-of-living adjustments to cover the cost of the compensation package.

The deal also expands health care benefits and increases pension payments over four years.

New workers hired under the agreement will start at 70 percent of the maximum base pay rate and will accrue vacation at a slower rate.

The agreement with Chicago-based Navistar covers 8,500 production, maintenance, clerical and technical workers at plants in Atlanta; Baltimore; Dallas; Melrose Park, Ill.; Springfield, Ohio; and Indianapolis and Fort Wayne, Ind.

Pact could end lockout

The Steelworkers have reached a tentative agreement with WCI Steel that could end the lockout of 1,700 employees. USWA Locals 1375 and 6824 will vote on the pact the week of Oct 23.

Workers at the Warren, Ohio, plant were locked out Aug. 31, just hours before the expiration of their contract. They were seeking industry parity in wages, benefits, pensions and job security.

Following the lockout, the company hired thugs to patrol the gates and brought in scabs and management personnel to operate the plant. On Sept. 29, the company suspended all operations.

Workers held an Oct. 5 rally where USWA President George Becker lambasted the company for giving its former president a $2.8 million golden parachute, but refusing to give its workers a fair deal.

BCT ratifies Sunshine

The Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers ratified a new three-year contract with Sunshine Biscuits that raises wages by $1.40 an hour over the term and increases pension benefits.

The agreement covers some 1,700 employees at five Sunshine plants around the country. Workers will receive an initial pay raise of 30 cents an hour, beginning in March 1996; 40 cents the following March; 25 cents in October 1997; and 45 cents in April 1998. The current average hourly wage is $15.

Monthly pension benefits for retirees with 25 years of service will increase by $50 next January, followed by another $50 raise in 1997. The company also agreed to establish a 401(k) plan for employees.

Labor Stands UP to speak out

By Michael Byrne

Since the last convention, the AFL-CIO has undertaken a systematic review of its communications programs, trying to assess why the American people don't understand that unions are indispensable to the nation's economic, social and political progress.

The long-range effort involved national polling and focus groups conducted by Peter D. Hart Research Associates, as well as a series of interviews with union officers and their communications staffs. The work resulted in a candid assessment and recommendations called "Being Heard," by the Washington public relations firm of Greer, Margolis, Mitchell, Burns and Associates.

The upshot of that work, the federation's campaign to Stand UP for America's Working Families, prompted AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue to announce with his election Aug. 1 "the AFL-CIO's arrival into America's daily conversation." He said he will use his position to be "the public voice of labor. In the electronic age in which we live, it is a primary responsibility of the AFL-CIO president to be out there, standing up and speaking out."

To improve the effort in news media outreach, Donahue appointed Candice Johnson to be the first press secretary of the AFL-CIO. And he created a new position of special assistant to the president for communications, which is being filled on an interim basis by GMMB&A officers Frank Greer and David Mitchell.

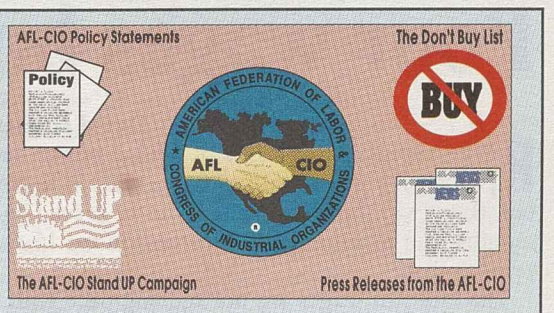
The Being Heard report was first presented to the Executive Council in May 1994. As the council summarizes in its report to the 1995 convention, the recommendations emphasized five core points:

- The labor movement needs to focus its communications on showing how unions contribute to a better America for working people generally, and how unions are changing to meet a changing world.
- The labor movement must practice "message discipline" — that is, agree upon a couple of powerful ideas as the core message and then find ways to consistently communicate and reinforce that message.
- Labor leaders must be taught the skills required to communicate effectively on television and through the media generally in a media age.
- The labor movement should devote greater attention to "earned media" — which is contrasted with "free media" that comes to any newsmaking organization. Earned media results from proactive outreach to reporters, editors and producers that results in positive coverage, rather than simply reacting to media inquiries.
- The AFL-CIO should, to the greatest extent possible, coordinate paid media by the federation and its affiliates, and use paid media to reach opinion leaders and key demographic groups with the labor movement's basic message.

The council directed that Being Heard be presented to legislative, political, education and civil rights directors among affiliates before it was turned over to the Public Relations Staff Committee. Over the next nine months, these union public relations directors developed the Stand UP for America's Working Families campaign.

The four campaign themes of Good Jobs, Good Wages, Health and Safety (or Worker Protections) and a Real Voice on the Job "embrace multiple issues of concern to workers and their unions and provide a way of integrating these issues into understandable messages that speak directly to important concerns of working families," the council reported.

With the signature line, "The Men and Women of the AFL-CIO, leading the fight for America's working families," which carries through in every component of the Stand UP campaign, the labor movement hopes to continue to hammer home the essential point that unions are fighting for the interests of every worker.



AFL-CIO home page a big hit on Internet

The AFL-CIO "home page" on the World Wide Web is a smash hit — ranking among the top 5 percent of sites accessed on the Internet, a Point Survey reveals.

"It's quite an honor to be recognized by Point Communications after just four months on the Internet," said Blair Calton, who maintains and updates the web site. "The AFL-CIO home page has been very popular. Between Sept. 7 and Oct. 7, there were 4,200 accesses for information from the AFL-CIO page."

Point, which provides Internet users a catalog of the most lively and useful web sites, will include a screen shot of the AFL-CIO page on their service (http://www.pointcom.com) and in books containing their reviews. The AFL-CIO address is http://www.aflcio.org.

Calton also noted that LaborNET, the federation's private on-line section of CompuServe, just added its 2,000th member in less than two years, as unions have expanded their use of the service.

Institute expected to play key role in new organizing

Continued from Page 1

The Executive Council has backed Donahue's plan to create, for the first time, an AFL-CIO Organizing Fund that will begin with $5 million next year and grow to at least $20 million within three years "to fuel multiunion organizing on a scale beyond the reach of any single union."

Donahue said he expects the investment to leverage another $80 million from affiliates by 1999, generating some $100 million for organizing activity.

The federation's Organization and Field Services Department has a number of multiunion organizing programs under way, including the Los Angeles Manufacturing Action Project (LAMAP), with 10 unions combining to target specific industries in a 23-mile stretch from L.A. to the ports of Long Beach. The objective, said AFL-CIO Regional Director David Sickler, "is to get master agreements so that we can't be picked off by nonunion employers."

The Organizing Institute is expected to play a major role in the revitalization of union organizing. Since its creation in October 1989, it has graduated several hundred new organizers into the union ranks.

Many of the people who need unions the most are women and minorities, and the institute has focused on these individuals, recruiting on college campuses and in community organizations as well as among members of affiliated unions, said Allison Porter, the institute's assistant director.

A major aspect of the institute's program is the Elected Leader Task Force, which seeks to make organizing a top priority for local and regional union leaders. The task force recently completed an intense two-day session to discuss and share strategies and ideas that can work in various communities.

Organizing starts at the local level, said Tom Woodruff, president of Service Employees District 1199, a local with a successful organizing record. "We have to use 50 percent of our energy to exercise the power we already have and the other 50 percent to get new power," he said. "We have got to spend time, money and resources on organizing."

Associations hold promise

The labor movement's organizing commitment, Donahue said, "requires a willingness to experiment in all aspects of organizing — from militant, confrontational tactics to associational unionism for those who, for whatever reason, cannot now have the full protection of union representation and collective bargaining rights."

"Millions of workers today desperately need and want a union to represent them and millions more workers want to be a part of associations of employees," he said.

Associate membership programs developed in conjunction with Union Privilege benefits, which range from mortgage assistance to credit cards, have been very effective.

Nearly 37 percent of trade union leaders who ordered Union Privilege promotional literature said in a survey that they used the materials in organizing. They credited it with helping gain more than 20,000 new members.

About two-thirds of local leaders report that their members had an overwhelmingly positive response to their union's Union Privilege benefits. Another 200 leaders using the Union Plus magazine said the magazine played a key role in helping them recruit 3,100 new members.

Union Privilege President Charles McDonald said this survey "has helped validate what many union organizers already know — that the Union Privilege benefits can and do play a substantial role in attracting new members to the union and in keeping them there once they join."

These benefits also are attractive incentives for "free riders" to join. The Government Employees use what they call "lunch and learn" and "metropolitan empowerment initiatives" to spread the news to the 500,000 government workers who are not members of unions but enjoy protections and benefits gained through the union's efforts.

"We've done nine geographic blitzes with the metropolitan empowerment initiatives, which are two-week organizing drives," said Sharon Pinnock, AFGE's director of membership and organization. "We talk about the benefits only union members receive and offer political action training."

Poor wages boosting the ranks of poor people

By David Kameras

Real earnings, the measure of buying power that a paycheck holds, improved 0.4 percent in September. But it was down 0.1 percent for the preceding 12 months, and plummeted 11.9 percent in the 15 years prior to that.

The fact that wages are not keeping pace with the long-term rise in the cost of living has meant destitution for millions of American working families. While the increase in the nation's poor has leveled off, 14.5 percent of the population still dwell below the poverty line, according to the latest figures released by the Census Bureau.

"The 38 million Americans who continue to live in poverty remind us that we still have a long way to go," said Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich.

"Perhaps most disturbing is the existence of millions of people who hold jobs, yet still cannot climb out of poverty," he said. "For a decade and a half, we have witnessed a sharp rise in the number of these Americans — men and women who work hard, but can barely make ends meet. As a group, they go by a name that ideally should be a contradiction: the working poor."

Reich took to task congressional efforts to scale back or eliminate a host of programs — such as the Earned Income Tax Credit, which lowered the poverty rolls by about 2.1 million last year — aimed at alleviating the pain engendered by economic disruption.

"It makes no sense to point hard-working Americans toward the ladder of opportunity, and then kick away the rungs — by scrapping the EITC, cutting education and job training and refusing to raise the minimum wage," he said.

The same figures also show that the gap between the wealthy and everyone else continues to widen. Last year, 49.1 percent of income went to the top 20 percent of income-earning households, up from 45.2 percent in 1984. At the same time, the three middle-income groups, representing 60 percent of households, took in only 47.3 percent of income, down from 50.8 percent.

Census also found that 39.7 million Americans, or 15.2 percent of the population, were without health insurance last year. This figure doesn't reflect the widespread weakening of coverage for many of those who have it.

The Republican response in Congress has been to push a $245 billion, seven-year tax cut, more than half of which would go to the richest 5 percent. Those making more than $200,000 a year, the richest 1 percent, would see their tax bills slashed an average $12,600 per year.

"At a time when the wealthy are already securing the bulk of the gains from economic wealth and income gaps between them and other Americans are at record levels, it makes little sense to lavish large tax breaks on them, paid for by a sweeping array of budget cuts that would reduce the disposable income and living standards of tens of millions of Americans of lesser means," said Robert Greenstein, director of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

September's gain in real earnings did not so much reflect income growth as low inflation, with consumer prices advancing a slim 0.2 percent. "Food prices increased, but were more than offset by energy drops, and increases were subdued or non-existent in most categories," noted AFL-CIO economist Anne Draper.

Specifically, prices rose on other goods and services, such as personal care items (0.6 percent), food and beverages (0.5 percent), medical care (0.3 percent), entertainment (0.3 percent) and housing (0.1 percent). Prices dropped for apparel and upkeep (0.2 percent) and transportation (0.2 percent).

By themselves, average hourly earnings and average weekly hours both rose 0.3 percent. Inflation over 12 months was a low 2.5 percent.

Finished goods prices, which are paid by producers, rose 0.3 percent, the first increase since May.

August trade slows long march into hole

The U.S. merchandise trade deficit in August, at $15.9 billion, marked an improvement over July's record $17.3 billion gap, but kept the economy on track for posting the worst overall deficit ever this year.

The bilateral goods deficit with Japan remained essentially the same, at $5.1 billion — not counting the huge amount of merchandise produced offshore and slapped with a Japanese nameplate for the U.S. market. But the sheer size of that number, nearly one-third of the overall figure, confirms the need for U.S. trade negotiators to pry open Japanese markets.

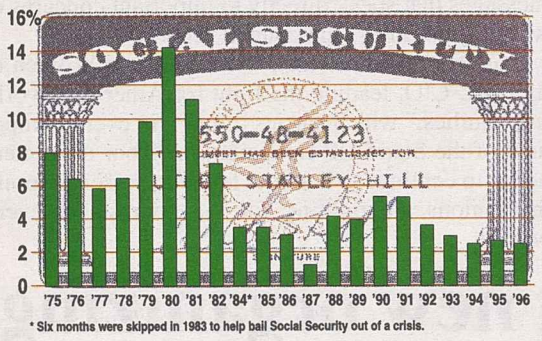
More ominous, the deficit with China continued to skyrocket, from $3.3 billion to $3.9 billion in one month. For the first eight months of the year, it hit a record $21.8 billion, up 24 percent from the same period in 1994.

The merchandise deficit with Mexico, while somewhat improved in August at $1.1 billion, didn't even exist a year ago. For the first half of 1995, the deficit in autos and parts totaled $5.7 billion, 115 percent more than the same period a year earlier.

"Growing wage inequality, broad-based deterioration of wage levels and job insecurity plague American families, creating severe economic hardship for low- and middle-income workers," said Greg Woodhead, an economist with the AFL-CIO Task Force on Trade. "As global trade expands, U.S. trade policy must focus on reducing this nation's huge and persistent trade imbalance. American workers demand this of their government."

DATA

1996 COLA = 2.6%



* Six months were skipped in 1983 to help bail Social Security out of a crisis.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

The 2.6 percent cost-of-living adjustment for Social Security for 1996 is the smallest since 1987. Republicans in Congress want to "downsize" the CPI upon which COLAs have been based since 1975.

Unemployment Rate	
September	5.6 percent
From August	Unchanged
Real Earnings	
September	+0.4 percent
From Sept. '94	-0.1 percent
Since 1979	-11.9 percent
Consumer Prices (CPI-W)	
September	+0.3 percent
Sept. '94-Sept. '95	+2.5 percent
Producer Prices (Finished Goods)	
September	+0.3 percent
August	-0.1 percent
Merchandise Trade Deficit	
August	$15.9 billion
July	$17.3 billion

AFL-CIO NEWSGRAFIC

Factory losses mar other job gains

The jobless rate in September held steady at 5.6 percent, consistent with a pattern that has evolved over the past six months. But manufacturing continued a slide that has seen the loss of some 200,000 jobs over the same period.

The official jobless rate, representing 7.5 million people, is at about the same level as it was a year ago. Nonetheless, "with 1.6 million other available workers, including discouraged workers, and 4.6 million involuntarily part time who want full-time work, there is a total of 13.7 million workers with unemployment and under-employment and earnings-loss problems," noted Rudy Oswald, the AFL-CIO's chief economist.

Feeding the unemployment rate is the widespread "downsizing" taking place at corporations throughout the country, a phenomenon resulting in "profound social costs," said Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich.

In recent weeks, layoffs have been announced or implemented at Baltimore Gas and Electric Co. (1,250 jobs), AT&T Global Information Solutions in Dayton, Ohio (1,300 jobs), Commonwealth Edison Co. (up to 3,000 jobs) and Kellogg Co. (1,250 jobs). Some analysts estimate that if current efforts to balance the federal budget succeed, 250,000 civil servants could eventually lose their jobs.

"Layoffs are always devastating, whether it's one or 1,000 who lose their jobs," said Gladys Greene, president of Electrical Workers Local 1805, many of whose members are facing a fifth round of job cuts at a Westinghouse Electric Corp. facility in Linthicum, Md.

G.J. Meyer, author of "Executive Blues: Down and Out in Corporate America," opined that the downsizing trend reflects "the decay of our culture," that in the United States, "people exist for society, rather than vice versa."

And many of those out of work are getting little help from the government. Only 32 percent of officially jobless workers were getting unemployment compensation, Oswald noted.

That figure is down 40 percent from 1947, with a sharp decline in the early 1980s, according to a report by policy analysts with the Labor Department's Advisory Council on Unemployment Compensation. The decline in unionization has contributed to that trend, since unions historically have helped to educate their members about eligibility requirements, the report noted. Tighter eligibility requirements, taxation of benefits, contractions in manufacturing and greater joblessness in states with lower benefit levels also were cited.

Payroll jobs increased by 121,000 in September, mostly in service industries and retail trade, while manufacturing lost an additional 32,000 jobs.

"Since January 1993, the economy has generated more than 7.4 million new jobs," said Reich, who touted a "Goldilocks recovery — not too hot, not too cold." The unemployment figures indicate that "this Goldilocks has no intention of leaving. She won't be scared away by the bears," he said.

The data comes in after a summer with little change from a year ago in youth employment. The increase in youth jobs between April and July was 2.6 million, 320,000 less than in the summer of 1994, with 64.9 percent of young people employed.

Unemployment in September remained steady for white (4.8 percent) and African-American (11.3 percent) workers, while decreasing for Hispanics (9.9 percent to 8.9 percent). It increased for adult men (4.8 percent to 4.9 percent), adult white men (4.2 percent to 4.3 percent), white teenagers (12.1 percent to 13.3 percent), and African-American adult men (9.4 percent to 9.6 percent), women (9 percent to 9.5 percent) and teenagers (38.9 percent to 39.7 percent); dropped for adult women (5 percent to 4.9 percent), adult white women (4.3 percent to 4.1 percent) and teenagers (17.7 percent to 17.5 percent); and held steady for teenage men (5.6 percent) and teenage women (5.6 percent).

Of 11 large states, unemployment increased in Florida (4.6 percent to 5.6 percent), North Carolina (4.6 percent to 4.7 percent) and Pennsylvania (5.5 percent to 6.4 percent); decreased in California (7.8 percent to 7.2 percent), Illinois (6 percent to 5.4 percent), Michigan (5.1 percent to 4.8 percent), New Jersey (6.6 percent to 5.7 percent), New York (7.1 percent to 6.8 percent), Ohio (5.4 percent to 5.2 percent) and Texas (6.7 percent to 6.1 percent); and remained unchanged in Massachusetts (5.3 percent).

— David Kameras



AFGE photo

The union image is raised with a balloon sponsored by the Government Employees and Union Privilege at the 1995 Kodak Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta – one of the world's most photographed events.

NEWSMAKERS

Postal Workers President **Moe Biller** was overwhelmingly re-elected to his sixth term in office. Biller defeated **Michael Ganino, Jr., Tom Ketchum** and **Dave Daniel**. Executive Vice President **William Burris** and Secretary-Treasurer **Douglas C. Holbrook** also were re-elected to their posts in the mail ballot.

Herb Sargent was re-elected as president of the Writers Guild, East. **Albert Ruben** was elected vice president in a contested race among three candidates who had been nominated by the membership. **Bruce Campbell** was elected without opposition as secretary-treasurer. The Writers Guild, East includes writers of prime time and daytime television shows and motion picture writers in the eastern United States.

Morton Bahr, president of the Communications Workers, will lead the Commission for a Nation of Lifelong Learners. The newly established commission will investigate the state of adult learning and make recommendations for government, employers, labor and higher education to improve access to lifelong learning opportunities. The commission is sponsored by a consortium of educational organizations and funded through a W.K. Kellogg Foundation grant.

Brenda Moon has been named an assistant director in the AFL-CIO's Education Department. Moon formerly served as the director of the AIDS in the Workplace project at the George Meany Center for Labor Studies.

Marc Baldwin joins the AFL-CIO's Employee Benefits Department as assistant director. Baldwin has worked at the National Commission for Employment Policy and in the research department of the UAW.

AWARDS

Capt. **Timothy A. Brown**, president of the Masters, Mates and Pilots, received the Silver Mariner Award and the Outstanding Professional Achievement Award at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy. The award is presented to individuals who have sailed at least 25 years and who have attained and sailed on their master's license. Brown received the Professional Achievement Award for his labor efforts on behalf of the maritime industry.

The American Labor Museum/Botto House National Landmark will honor its former president, **Alfred W. Di Tolla**, posthumously and its current president, **Michael Goodwin**, at its 1995 Sol Stetin Awards Dinner. Di Tolla, who was president of the Theatrical and Stage Employees, died in December 1994. Goodwin is the president of the Office and Professional Employees. Roofers Local 4 will receive special recognition for its apprentices who volunteered their time to put a new roof on Botto House, saving the museum $10,000.

Gil Noble, New York producer and public affairs television host of "Like It Is," received the 1995 Paul Robeson Award, honoring those who, by their work and lives, are committed to the struggle for justice, equality and principles exemplified by Robeson.

Alma L. Lee, president of the Government Employees National Veterans Affairs Council, received the Bernice B. Heffner Outstanding Women's Achievement award for promoting the goals of AFGE on issues affecting women.

CORRECTIONS

Mine Workers General Counsel Bob Stropp and Organizing Committee Chairman Joe Hamilton were misidentified in an Oct. 9 story on the union's convention.

The Metropolitan Washington AFL-CIO, in cooperation with public- and private-sector unions, sponsored the Sept. 27 rally at the U.S. Capitol. AFSCME Secretary-Treasurer William Lucy was one of the speakers at the rally.

RESOURCES

AFL-CIO CONVENTION

The New York State AFL-CIO Community Services Program is offering a 24-hour, **toll-free hotline** that AFL-CIO Convention delegates and their families can use for help with personal needs. In New York, call 800/EAP-1984; out of state, call 518/465-6926.

CONFERENCES

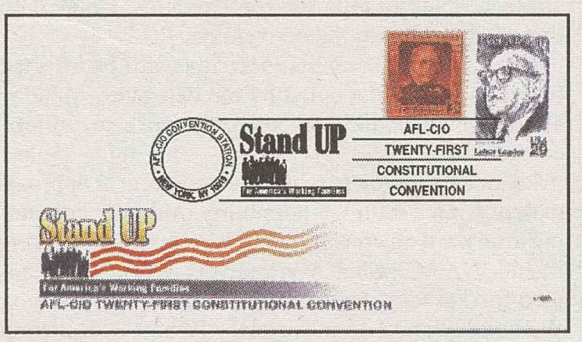
The **AFL-CIO Human Resources Development Institute** annual conference will be held Dec. 17-19 at the Buena Vista Palace Hotel, Walt Disney World Village, Orlando, Fla. Contact Carol Claggett at HRDI, 202/638-3912.

The U.S. Department of Education is sponsoring **The 1995 Goals 2000 Teacher Forum Teleconference** Nov. 12-14. For materials and information, call 1-800/USA-LEARN.

PUBLICATIONS

Member Assistance Programs in the Workplace: The Role of Labor in the Prevention and Treatment of Substance Abuse traces the origins and goals of these programs and analyzes the characteristics that enable programs to succeed. Copies are $10 each. To order, call Cornell University Press at 607/277-2211.

Look for the Union Label: A History of the International Ladies' Garment Workers is a 360-page book that tells of a union that made "contributions to the American body and soul that go far beyond those of collective bargaining." Copies are $21.95 for paper and $55 for cloth. To order, call M.E. Sharpe Inc. at 800/541-6563.



Commemorative stamps with a special AFL-CIO convention cancellation will be available at the convention's post office, which also will sell George Meany stamps.

STATE AFL-CIOs

Kansas

Topeka, Kan.

After the 1994 elections opened the gate for "a flood of anti-labor bills, our success has to be measured by what didn't pass," Kansas AFL-CIO Executive Secretary-Treasurer Jim DeHoff reported.

Delegates to the federation's 15th biennial convention Oct. 4-5 considered a number of resolutions addressing legislative issues, including the TEAM Act, repeal of the state's 96-year-old prevailing wage law and efforts to gut the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

Officers reported that the federation has joined with the League of Women Voters to sue the state for failure to comply with the National Voter Registration Act.

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling warned, "Only six votes in the Senate and President Clinton's veto pen now protect the labor movement from being legislated into obscurity. I haven't spent my entire life in the labor movement to allow the Newt Gingrich Republicans to legislate us out of existence or into irrelevancy. Not on my watch."

Other speakers included AFL-CIO COPE Director Richard Walsh, Kansas House Speaker Tim Shallenberger and Kansas House Minority Leader Tom Sawyer. Vincent O'Brien, assistant director of the AFL-CIO Department of Organization and Field Services, led a workshop on organizing.

Massachusetts

Boston

Some 450 delegates to the Massachusetts AFL-CIO 38th annual convention increased per capita and elected officers.

Delegates voted to increase per capita by 5 cents to 50 cents. A 2-cent increase is effective Jan. 1, 1996, and 3 cents for Jan. 1, 1997.

Massachusetts AFL-CIO President Joseph Faherty and Robert Haynes, secretary-treasurer, were re-elected by acclamation. Kathleen Cassavant of UNITE! and James Donnovan of AFSCME were elected executive vice presidents.

Pointing to the Republican assault on OSHA, Medicare and Social Security, AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue reminded the delegates "we have to educate and activate our members as we never have before."

Other speakers included Charles Flaherty, speaker of the Massachusetts House, and Rep. Joseph P. Kennedy II (D-Mass.).

Montana

Billings, Mont.

Montana AFL-CIO President Jerry Driscoll and Executive Secretary Donald R. Judge were re-elected for two-year terms during the 39th annual convention.

Five of the six board members were re-elected without opposition. Pat Mischel defeated Gene Van Dyke to maintain his board seat.

The convention, with the largest attendance ever, passed resolutions to seek an increase in the state minimum wage of 50 cents a year, opposed a payroll tax imposed on workers to pay for Worker's Compensation Old Fund Liability, opposed school vouchers and paid tribute to former AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland.

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling praised the delegates for their work in the statehouse, "defeating a right-to-work bill and the attack on Davis-Bacon — in a Republican-controlled legislature, with a Republican governor pledging to veto HB.123 if it was passed. I applaud each and every one of you," she said.

Other speakers included the "road warriors," striking workers from Decatur, Ill.; Piotr Hendryk Zak, the Polish Solidarity spokesman; and Jim Murry, former state federation president.

Rhode Island

Providence, R.I.

Delegates to the Rhode Island AFL-CIO convention voted to raise per capita based on a cost-of-living formula, beginning Jan. 1. They also unanimously re-elected Frank J. Montanaro as president and George H. Nee as secretary-treasurer.

The convention resolved to fight to protect the Davis-Bacon Act, oppose voter initiatives on privatization and increase the minimum wage.

The nearly 500 delegates heard from AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue and Laborers President Arthur A. Coia, both of whom urged union members to Stand UP against the anti-worker, Republican-controlled Congress.

Training reaches the grass roots

Union activists gaining legislative resources

By Colleen M. O'Neill

The AFL-CIO legislative training program has moved to congressional districts and into the hands of staff from the AFL-CIO and affiliated unions — trainers who are training trainers.

Training sessions for the staff members were conducted in late September and early October, with the first local workshop held Oct. 7 in Indiana.

The workshops are designed to help teach 500 local union leaders how to carry out grass-roots actions on specific legislative issues and political campaigns.

The program eventually will be "the most intense political effort in the history of the federation — and I am determined that it will be the most successful," Tom Donahue said Aug. 1 when he became AFL-CIO president.

"We cannot neglect or ignore our greatest potential political asset — the millions upon millions of trade unionists and family members who can be the most powerful foot-soldiers of the entire electoral process.

"We must reach them better, we must recruit more of them," he said in naming Susan Washington to direct the project as the associate director of the AFL-CIO Department of Legislation.

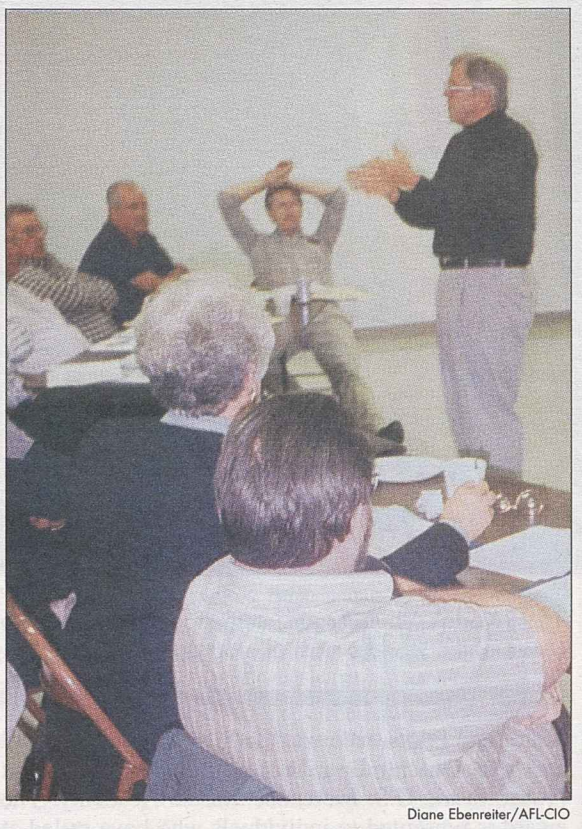
To develop a training model, "we drew a lot from union programs already in place," Washington said. "This program differs from the Legislative Action Committees because it considers the longer term.

"If people get excited about legislative issues, then when the election rolls around they'll be ready to go to work," she said. "The endorsement process will be easier, because people will understand the issues and know how the candidates voted."

The program that staff is taking to the field stresses lobbying at the grass-roots level and the development of an ongoing strategic plan to address legislative issues or political campaigns. It provides a variety of grass-roots activities to be adapted to the situation. Participants can apply the training.

The goal, Washington says, is to have local union activists return to their workplaces and communities confident enough and comfortable enough — immune to being bedazzled by elected officials — to be able to plan and carry out campaigns that fit them and their sisters and brothers at the local level.

The first meetings were targeted to states and districts that are key to the legislative fights on the agenda before the end of 1995 — for example, budget reconciliation and funding for Medicare and Medicaid. Plans are being made to repeat the training on a regional basis and to expand the program in preparation for 1996 elections.



Diane Ebenreiter/AFL-CIO

Michael Klein of the AFL-CIO COPE staff conducts a workshop on legislative activism in Janesville, Wis.

Among those leading some of the early workshops in the field is COPE Region I Director Michael L. Klein, a veteran of the federation's "train-the-trainer" political action program.

"We have to get more basic" when it comes to such training, Klein asserted. "When it comes to the membership, they have feelings about issues — gun control, Medicare, prevailing wage, right to strike.

"They understand the issues, sometimes better than the member of Congress," he said. Now, the task is to get union members to make the connection and "see the impact of such issues on workers' daily lives" — so what happens in Washington does too matter, and union members can defy the bombardment of cynicism about public affairs that surrounds them.

Klein said once the connection between issue and action was made, the rest should come naturally.

"We need to use Samuel Gompers' words — reward our friends and punish our enemies," he said. "If we do a better job of teaching members who our enemies are, then do a better job of raising their confidence level to do something about it, they'll have all the tools."

Historic convention gets under way

Continued from Page 1

vention. While the percentage of union election victories has held steady, the number of workers voting in National Labor Relations Board elections in 1994 was only one-fourth what it was 25 years ago, when 600,000 voted in 1970, the council said.

This drastic decrease in organizing activity helps to account for the loss of 292,000 members since the 1993 convention, when it was reported the federation had lost 634,000 members since the 1991 convention. The AFL-CIO has just over 13 million members and, nationally, unions represent 15.5 percent of the nation's work force.

Sweeney and his supporters also will press for a number of constitutional amendments, seeking among other things to add a third executive officer with a salary equal to that of the secretary-treasurer. Linda Chavez-Thompson, a vice president of AFSCME, is running on the Sweeney slate for that position.

Donahue's running mate, Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling, was elected by the council at the same time Donahue was elected president. She will be opposed at the convention by Mine Workers President Richard L. Trumka, and the two candidates also are set for a Tuesday debate — this one with a one-hour format.

To consider structural changes in the federation, Donahue appointed and is chairing a Committee on Governance that includes Sweeney. The committee has focused on ways to enhance full participation in the labor movement, and has discussed increasing the number of Executive Council members and expanding the role of the General Board.

Easterling also has been conducting a review of operations at AFL-CIO headquarters with an eye toward improving both efficiency and diversity. She was scheduled to report to the Executive Council on that review prior to the convention.

Many of the convention decisions will be affected by what rules are adopted by the delegates. Monday afternoon, constitutional amendments also will be considered.

President Clinton is scheduled to appear at approximately 5 p.m., with the possibility of debate continuing afterward on constitutional issues. Other speakers include NAACP Chair Myrlie Evers-Williams, scheduled for Tuesday, human rights activist Harry Wu on Wednesday and Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich on Thursday.

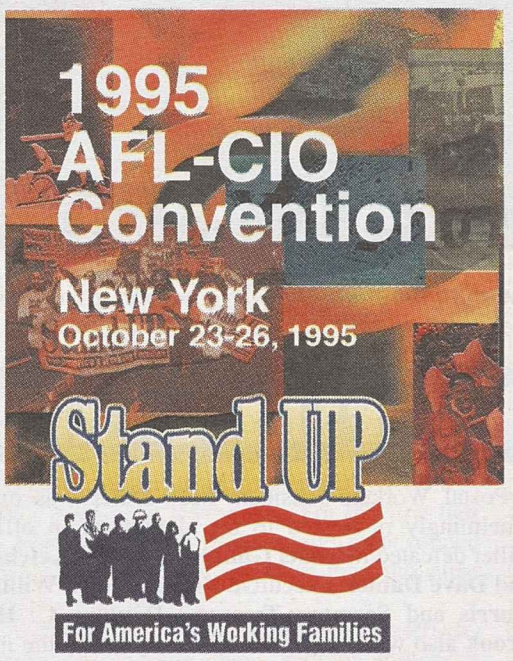
Running throughout the convention will be a Stand UP Action Center, an up-to-date "union hall" that will focus on communications and political action. Delegates and visitors will be able to contact their congressional representatives on key bills while the convention is in session.

The facility will feature a dozen phones programmed to ring at the U.S. Capitol switchboard; six personal computers equipped to send letters, e-mail and faxes to all members of Congress; a video link to the convention floor, where delegates will hear live reports of congressional action; a giant message to Congress visitors can sign; and radio and print interviews with "back-home" media outlets.

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UNION YES

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Newspaper Guild officials joined a rally of striking workers at the AFL-CIO convention. **See story, Page 5.**

AFL-CIO NEWS

VOLUME 40, NUMBER 23 NOVEMBER 6, 1995

Sweeney heralds 'a moment of hope'

By Michael Byrne
New York

The labor movement entered a new era Oct. 26 when AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney took the gavel and proclaimed "an extraordinary moment . . . a moment of hope and promise for the future."

Sweeney was joined by new Secretary-Treasurer Richard L. Trumka and a "unity slate" of 51 vice presidents, including 14 women and people of color, as the delegates to the AFL-CIO's 21st constitutional convention approved by acclamation the election of Linda Chavez-Thompson to the new office of executive vice president.

The new officers moved quickly to leave behind the partisan campaign — the first contested election in the 40-year history of the labor federation. That division was reflected in the closeness of the vote — 7.3 million for the Sweeney slate to 5.7 million for incumbent President Tom Donahue and Secretary-Treasurer Barbara J. Easterling.

That vote count, roughly 55 percent to 45 percent, was almost identical three times, first on a roll call vote that postponed the constitutional question of creating the new office, again in defeating the Donahue proposal for all 78 unions to get a seat on the new Executive Council, and the third time in the paper balloting for the officers.

Sweeney called Donahue "the most principled, caring and committed trade unionist that I know," and praised Easterling's experience and "singular achievement" of breaking the glass ceiling in the house of labor. At a post-convention meeting of the new Executive Council, he made plans for tributes not only to Donahue and Easterling, but also to Lane Kirkland, who served as the federation's second president for 16 years before retiring Aug. 1.

The extraordinary convention also saw rousing, standing ovations for President Clinton, human rights activist Harry Wu and Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich, as delegates assailed the Republican leadership in Congress with resolutions and impassioned floor speeches. **(See stories, Pages 4-13).**

In his acceptance speech, Sweeney decried "the power of big money (that) is shouting down the voices of workers and their families. The solution is all of us working together in a labor movement where we all can raise our voices from our workplaces to Washington."

Sweeney, 61, made clear that the labor movement was preparing for major changes to promote organizing and collective bargaining. "If anyone denies American workers their constitutional right to freedom of association, we will use old-fashioned mass

Continued on Page 9

Larger council reflects diverse face of labor

By David Kameras
New York

Bringing a distinctive increase in the diversity of the AFL-CIO Executive Council, the convention amended the federation's constitution to increase the number of vice presidents from 33 to 51, with 10 of those seats dedicated to women and people of color.

The slate was bargained between supporters of presidential candidates John J. Sweeney and Tom Donahue and introduced by supporters of both candidates — Food and Commercial Workers President Douglas H. Dority and AFSCME President Gerald W. McEntee.

The "unity slate" of 51 included 14 women and people of color and was brought to office with more than 13 million votes each, while a 52nd candidate for vice president, Harry Kelber, received 2,003 votes. **(New Executive Council, Page 11.)**

The vote indicated delegates were eager to put behind conflict after a sometimes heated campaign for the federation's executive offices.

"Who would have thought that we would have reached a point today, after the type and kind of debate that we had in this room, when we would be presenting

Continued on Page 10



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

The AFL-CIO's new leaders, Richard L. Trumka, Linda Chavez-Thompson and John J. Sweeney, conduct an impromptu news conference after the election results are announced at the end of the convention's third day. Sweeney and Trumka won 55 percent of the vote in the AFL-CIO's first contested election, then gained unanimous support to elect Chavez-Thompson in a new post of executive vice president.

Labor, Democrats ready to fight 'stupid' budget cuts

By Mike Hall

Mocking House Speaker Newt Gingrich's displeasure over the confrontational tone of AFL-CIO leadership, federation President John J. Sweeney declared that "American workers and their unions are ready for a showdown" over a Republican budget that would cut their pay and give the rich a huge tax break.

Sweeney was joined by House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.) at a press conference at AFL-CIO headquarters, as he sharply lashed the Republican leadership for the budget reconciliation package.

That budget plan would slash billions from Medicare, Medicaid and student loans, and raise taxes on low-wage working families in order to fund a massive tax cut for big business and individuals earning up to $200,000.

Gephardt praised labor's efforts in fighting the "mean-spirited and stupid" budget cuts. Even though the House and Senate had passed the bills in late October, "this battle for the future and soul of America is not over," he said. "It is just beginning. And let me tell you that in my view, this Republican budget is wrong on all counts and is dead on arrival and will be vetoed by the president of the United States."

"I don't doubt that working people and the AFL-CIO will be there every step of the rest of the way" in this budget battle, he told the crowd.

Just days after the GOP budget scheme was approved, new economic figures were released that showed that wages and benefits for workers in America rose only 2.7 percent in the past 12 months, the smallest increase on record.

"What's wrong with this picture?" Sweeney

Continued on Page 3



Rep. Richard A. Gephardt

BARGAINING

TWU rides job security

After rejecting a previous agreement, members of the Transport Workers approved new six-year contracts with American Airlines that raise wages 6.5 percent in the last three years.

The contracts cover 27,000 employees in eight separate work groups at American and contain "considerable changes" compared with a deal rejected in September, TWU Vice President Don Orlando said. The key changes in the new deal include job security and lump-sum payments, he said.

Under the agreements, wages are frozen for the first three years, but go up 6.5 percent by 2000. In lieu of raises, employees will receive the higher of a payment equal to 2 percent of gross earnings or the payout from the profit-sharing plan.

The deal also requires American to recall laid-off employees or allow transfers within the company instead of first hiring outside for new entry-level and semi-skilled classifications, Orlando said.

In a statement, TWU said the contracts provide "job security at the top rates in the industry. It is doubtful that these protections would have remained available had negotiations been extended through a long period of mediation and a possible strike situation."

Lockout ends with pact

Two Steelworkers locals approved a new four-year agreement with WCI Steel that increases wages and benefits and ends a seven-week lockout.

Under the agreement, some 1,700 production, maintenance and office employees will receive a $3,000 signing bonus, followed by a 50-cents-an-hour wage increase in 1996, another $1,000 bonus in 1997 and a 3 percent wage raise in 1998.

The company also will establish a new defined benefit pension plan, which when combined with current plans will pay retirees a minimum of $35 for each year of service.

The new pension plan will be financed initially with $14 million from a $28 million trust fund set up to protect employee benefits when WCI purchased the Warren, Ohio, plant in 1988. The remaining $14 million in the trust fund will be distributed to the employees in amounts totaling up to $7,000 each.

The wage scale now ranges from $11.74 an hour to $17.98 an hour. Under the new contract, the scale will become $12.60 to $19.03.

UFCW, food chains agree

A year before the current contracts expire, the Food and Commercial Workers approved a replacement agreement covering 90,000 employees of seven southern California supermarket chains.

The new four-year master agreement defers a 45-cents-per-hour wage increase due in October 1995, and replaces it with a lump-sum bonus of $500-$1,000. Wages will increase in the last three years of the agreement by 80 cents an hour for general merchandise clerks and meat wrappers and by $1.15 for grocery clerks and journeymen meatcutters.

The contract also maintains the current level of health care benefits.

The seven chains — Vons, Lucky Stores, Albertson's, Smith's Food & Drug, Hughes Family Markets, Stater Bros. and Ralph's Grocery — negotiated as a group.

Machinists win round at Boeing

By James B. Parks

The Machinists won a major round in their strike against Boeing when a National Labor Relations Board official backed the union's claims that the company had not bargained in good faith.

The NLRB regional director in Seattle found there were "reasonable grounds" for concluding that Boeing was not bargaining in good faith on some issues with the union, said Terry Jensen, the board's regional attorney.

Jensen said Boeing would have to "move quickly" in response to the Oct. 27 findings or face the issuance of a complaint, perhaps as early as Nov. 3, he said.

Because of Boeing's negotiating tactics, the strike has been an unfair labor practice strike from the beginning, Jensen said, noting that his office also is referring to the NLRB counsel the question of whether to seek an injunction against the company.

The union "sincerely" hopes "Boeing has a change of heart and starts openly and honestly working toward a contract that addresses the needs of workers and the company," IAM negotiator Bob Gregory said. "That's all that's needed to settle the strike," he added. Talks will resume this week.

The union had complained that Boeing withheld information on health insurance costs and subcontracting, had proposed major changes in health care coverage during the last stages of bargaining and had insisted on changes in retiree benefits.

Boeing responded to the NLRB ruling by agreeing to provide information on health care costs, but not on subcontracting and job losses.

Some 32,500 Machinists in three states walked out Oct. 5 after overwhelmingly rejecting the company's latest contract offer. The locals on strike are located in the Puget Sound area, Portland, Ore., and Wichita. The strikers rallied Nov. 2 in Seattle on foot and on motorcycles to send a message to Boeing: "We will last one day longer than you can!"

The union also is asking the Clinton administration to initiate Section 301 trade sanctions against China for forcing Boeing to transfer jobs and valuable technology to China in return for buying airplanes from the company.

"It's absolutely essential that a country of 1.2 billion comes into the world trade order recognizing international norms," said Barbara Shailor, IAM international affairs director. "Bullying its way in will not only distort but destroy the concept of free trade the Western industrialized nations have known."

If the administration, which is reviewing the matter, does not file a complaint, the union said it would do so on its own. By shifting production overseas and to nonunion U.S. subcontractors, the percentage of Boeing components made by Boeing's union workers has dropped to 48 percent, compared with 75 percent in the late 1980s, the IAM said.

"I am not an isolationist," said IAM President George Kourpias, "but the question is, is Boeing just going to become a seller of airplanes, and not a builder? How much of its production are we going to lose? Are we going to go to 20 percent?"

Kourpias told the AFL-CIO convention that "the whole issue of our strike at Boeing is about the future of this country. It's about whether we have some high-wage jobs left in manufacturing, whether there is going to be an aerospace industry in America.

"We say to Boeing, just give us an opportunity for an input, an opportunity to compete, to show you that American workers have the skill to produce and compete with the rest of the world," Kourpias said. "But this is all greed, corporate greed."

"The president of Boeing China said in The Wall Street Journal some months ago that Boeing Company has a responsibility to help the Chinese build the infrastructure of China," he said. "I wonder who is going to build the infrastructure of Seattle and Portland and Wichita, St. Louis, Hartford and the rest of those cities that are going to be devastated with this type of action."

Mary L. Johnson, secretary-treasurer of IAM Lodge 834 in Wichita, told delegates to the AFL-CIO convention that she and her fellow workers were on strike to save jobs. "I can't afford to pay anything if I don't have a job," the single mother said.

"The lower the cost of doing business, less health benefits, fewer workers, the more valuable the stock options held by senior management usually become," she said. "They enrich themselves by demanding more givebacks from average workers and reducing their job security. No company that makes billions in profits and hands out million-dollar bonuses to its executives has any business cutting health insurance for retired and active workers.

"We cannot and must not allow our most, best industrial assets to be extorted away by other nations or bargained away piecemeal by greedy multinationals," Johnson said.

FedEx pilots turn up heat for pact

Federal Express Corp. may have to scrap its highly successful marketing pledge of "punctual, dependable delivery" if the carrier fails to reach agreement with its pilots before a 30-day cooling-off period expires.

In a message printed in USA Today newspaper ads, the Air Line Pilots said, "FedEx management's intransigence now threatens you, our loyal customers."

"If FedEx management continues its stubborn refusal to reach a fair agreement by Nov. 25, 1995, then we will be forced to exercise our legal right to withdraw or delay our services," ALPA said. Bargaining for a first contract began in August 1993.

The union has sent ballots out to members to authorize the Master Executive Council at FedEx to initiate self-help and to "demonstrate, in tangible terms, to management the strength and extent of pilots' resolve."

Although there are moves afoot to strip ALPA of its certification, a federal appeals court recently rejected allegations that the National Mediation Board's ballot and voting procedures were biased, and also denied management's request to impose work-rule changes before a contract is reached.

After the NMB declared an impasse in the talks Oct. 19, the union offered to accept arbitration if agreed to by the company by 5:00 p.m. Oct. 23, and its process worked out by Oct. 30.

"Federal Express' failure to respond positively . . . has placed the company, its pilots and most importantly its customers on a dangerous road," said Capt. Joe DePete, chairman of the MEC. "ALPA is absolutely committed to making every reasonable effort to settle this dispute through negotiations, with the assistance of the NMB, or through a voluntary arbitration agreement reached by both parties during the cooling-off period."

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Editor: Michael Byrne

Assistant Editors: David Kameras, Colleen M. O'Neill, James B. Parks

Staff Writers: Muriel H. Cooper, Mike Hall, Sharolyn A. Rosier

Graphics/Layout: Stan Hitt, Hindi M. Fracasse

AFL-CIO Press Secretary: Candice Johnson

AFL-CIO Headquarters: 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006
Telephone: (202) 637-5010 • CompuServe: 71112,53 • Internet: http://www.aflcio.org

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE AFL-CIO, LEADING THE FIGHT FOR AMERICA'S WORKING FAMILIES

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Richard L. Trumka, *Secretary-Treasurer*

Linda Chavez-Thompson, *Executive Vice President*

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Bill Burke/Page One Photography

House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt meets the press at the AFL-CIO headquarters, where the audience includes President John J. Sweeney, Secretary- Treasurer Richard L. Trumka and Executive Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson. Sweeney said U.S. workers are "ready for a showdown" over GOP budget cuts.

Gephardt: GOP budget won't fly

Continued from Page 1

asked. "Productivity and profits are up, and the stock market is soaring, but real incomes for working families are down. I'll tell you what's wrong — America needs a raise. And I can further tell you that workers are frustrated, fed up and hungry for help. The trouble is, the Republican budget will give them just the opposite."

The House passed its version Oct. 26 by a 227-203 vote and the Senate approved a similar bill Oct. 28 by 52-47. Senate Democrats, with the help of moderate Republicans, were able to modify some of the more outrageous provisions in that version.

The seven-year budget plan "shatters the foundation that America's working families have counted on to provide economic security, educational opportunities, health care for seniors and fair taxes," wrote AFL-CIO Legislative Director Peggy Taylor in a letter to House and Senate members.

"The inequities in reconciliation should be obvious to those who have an understanding of the difficulties working families have endured for the past several years, and surely will continue to face. The bill's tax provisions are stunningly inequitable," she wrote.

The $270 billion in Medicare cuts would hurt older Americans with higher premiums in both bills and higher deductibles in the Senate version. The Senate did delete a provision in its bill that would have raised the Medicare eligibility age from 65 to 67, forcing men and women to work an additional two years or go without Medicare coverage.

The House passed its Medicare-cutting legislation separately Oct. 19 by a 231-201 vote, and then added the bill to the overall budget reconciliation.

"With this vote, we turn back 30 years of progress, 30 years of trust, 30 years of hope that our parents and grandparents will always have the health care they need," declared Rep. David E. Bonior (D-Mich.).

Republicans have claimed the $270 billion in Medicare cuts are needed to keep the program alive. But Gephardt told the AFL-CIO crowd, "The idea that they are going to save Medicare is laughable."

He noted that both Gingrich (R-Ga.) and Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole (R-Kan.) both recently acknowledged they would like to see the health insurance program for older Americans die.

Gingrich said, "Of course, we don't get rid of it in round one, because we don't think it's politically smart." He hopes his cuts will make the program "wither on the vine."

Dole told the American Conservative Union, "I was there fighting the fight, voting against Medicare . . . because we knew it wouldn't work in 1965."

"In other words," Gephardt said, Dole "looked at an America where poverty among seniors was more than double what it is today and said, 'that suits me just fine.' "

The House and Senate reconciliation legislation also would:

- Cut $182 billion from the Medicaid program, forcing millions of older Americans and their families who count on Medicaid to pay more for nursing home care. In some cases, elderly people might even lose their nursing home care altogether. In addition, up to 4.4 million poor children could lose their health insurance under the GOP-passed cuts.
- Cut student loan programs by $4 billion (Senate) or $10 billion (House).
- Repeal the Service Contracts Act, a prevailing wage law covering a variety of federally contracted jobs, including tens of thousands of low-wage workers who earn only somewhat more than minimum wage. However, provisions repealing the Davis-Bacon Act were removed.
- Require greater pension contributions while decreasing benefits for federal and postal employees.
- Jeopardize health benefits for nearly 90,000 coal miners and their families (House version).
- Provide for block grants to cover welfare programs (House version), which would result in thousands of poor families being dropped from assistance rolls.
- Cut the Earned Income Tax Credit program, leading to a higher tax burden for low-income families, penalizing those who can least afford it.
- Change capital gains taxes and the alternative minimum tax for corporations, minimizing the tax burden for big business and families earning $200,000 a year and more.

AFL-CIO's efforts gain recognition on the Hill

The AFL-CIO's Stand UP campaign has been the most visible opposition to GOP budget cuts, House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.) said.

New AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney promised to continue that vocal opposition, noting that in the weeks prior to the budget bill, the most recent Stand UP push resulted in hundreds of thousands of messages sent and received by union members across the country.

Some 411,000 pieces of direct mail on Medicare and Medicaid cuts were sent into union households in 57 key Republican congressional districts. The mailing was followed up by 150,000 phone calls to those union households, almost all of whom said they had or would make calls to Congress. In addition, more than 40,000 postcards were returned to the AFL-CIO affirming that phone calls had been made.

Medicare television commercials appeared in 16 Republican congressional districts, with radio spots airing in 20 districts.

In September, more than 38,000 phone calls were made to the AFL-CIO's toll-free congressional hot line, followed by more than 74,000 in October as the debate heated up.

CAPITOL DIGEST

House Republicans began their drive to strip unions of the ability to wage corporate campaigns by taking shots at one of the most frequently used tactics, "salting."

Salting, the effort of union organizers to be hired by nonunion employers, is a legitimate and legal tactic. The only reason nonunion employers oppose it is that they want to keep unions out of their workplaces, several labor leaders told the House Economic and Educational Opportunities subcommittee on oversight and investigations.

In written testimony, Electrical Workers President John J. Barry and Robert A. Georgine, president of the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department, said salting is being used more frequently in the construction industry because recent court rulings have made it more difficult to organize.

They also argued that having union organizers working on a nonunion work site does not interfere with the employer's right to set work rules or with productivity. "Rather, what is at stake here is whether employers should be allowed to discriminate on the basis of union membership and support," Barry said.

Further, he said, there is no conflict between a union organizer's duty to his or her nonunion employer and duty to the union. The organizer/employee is protected under the National Labor Relations Act just as any other employee and can discuss the benefits of joining a union, he said.

Georgine also urged the subcommittee to delay hearings until the U.S. Supreme Court decides a case on salting, NLRB vs. Town and Country Electric, which it heard Oct. 10.

Subcommittee Chair Peter Hoekstra (R-Mich.) announced the hearings on corporate campaigns after requests from three companies — Ryder Corp., United Parcel Service and Union Pacific Corp. — that are suffering as a result of Teamster corporate campaigns.

Hearings on other corporate campaign tactics are planned, but no dates have been set.

Elsewhere on Capitol Hill:

FAIR LABOR STANDARDS — The Economic and Educational Opportunities subcommittee on work force protections held hearings Nov. 1 on three bills opposed by the AFL-CIO that would exempt groups of employees from mandatory overtime payments.

The bills, H.R. 2391, H.R. 1227 and H.R. 2531, respectively, would allow private-sector employers to offer compensatory time instead of cash wages for overtime hours, to not pay employees for travel time if they use company vehicles to commute between home and work, and to remove "house parents" who work for non-profit institutions from minimum wage and overtime requirements.

Labor, allies set to begin '7 Days for Safe Jobs'

Safety and health activists are observing "Seven Days for Safe Jobs," beginning Nov. 6, holding events in more than 20 communities across the country.

The events, sponsored by local unions and Coalitions on Occupational Safety and Health (COSH groups), range from meetings to rallies to petition drives.

The observance is aimed at neutralizing support for OSHA-gutting legislation introduced in June by Rep. Cass Ballenger (R-N.C.), which is making its way through the legislative process.

Members of Congress already identified as supporters of the measure, H.R. 1834, will see firsthand their constituents' opposition to its outrageous approach to job safety. Other representatives will be urged to oppose the measure if it comes up in their committee or on the House floor for a vote.

The week for safe jobs continues through Nov. 12.

Among the states that will host events are California, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Wisconsin.

Clinton vows to stand up for working families

By James B. Parks
New York

The battle over the federal budget is a referendum on the kind of country America will be, President Clinton told the AFL-CIO convention, and it will take an all-out effort by organized labor to ensure that the country treats working people decently.

AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue introduced Clinton to the convention as "labor's friend in the White House . . . who stands between us and the right-wing Republicans who are determined to weaken or repeal every law that helps working men and women."

Donahue described a string of actions by the Clinton administration that have benefited workers: the Family and Medical Leave Act, Hatch Act reform, a strengthened National Labor Relations Board and his executive order banning federal agencies from doing business with companies that use scabs.

Entering to shouts of "four more years," Clinton pledged to stand with labor "every step of the way" in its struggle to better the lives of working people.

He thanked labor for its "strong and passionate grass-roots campaign for a year now to oppose the cuts in worker safety, in job training, in education and in health care being considered in Congress."

"The White House mail room is jammed with postcards from union retirees," he said. "You have got the Capitol Hill switchboards groaning with calls from your members. I know those ads you're running have gotten some members of Congress suffering with heartburn, and we just need to pour it on a little more."

Citing the dramatic changes in the world, Clinton said workers have to "harness this change to benefit ordinary people in our country," with policies that are "consistent with the basic values that made America great and that make life worth living" — opportunity for every American, dignity of work and commitment to strengthen families, nurture children and honor parents.

Three years after his election, the country is turning around, he said. The crime rate is down, 7.5 million jobs have been created and the combined rate of inflation and unemployment is the lowest in 25 years.

"And we proved you could do it together," he said. Instead of just condemning the government the way my predecessors did, we made a partnership with the federal employees and in a balanced and fair and disciplined way."



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

Delegates greet President Clinton with a rousing standing ovation on the first day of the convention.

"We've been able to prove you can grow the economy and be decent to working people," he said. The economy got better, not worse, when his administration demanded a fair, decent, effective NLRB, and when it refused to repeal the Davis-Bacon Act, cracked down on sweatshops and refused to go along with efforts to weaken workplace safety, he said.

"It is time we accepted a fundamental lesson: treating working people in a decent, fair, humane, enlightened way gives you a stronger American economy, not a weaker one," the president proclaimed.

The president's prescription for curing the nation's ills read like a checklist of labor's goals: raising the minimum wage, a G.I. bill that consolidates training programs and gives laid-off workers a chance to learn a new skill, and a tax deduction for middle-class families with children in college.

But Clinton was most passionate when he attacked the Republicans and their budget-balancing proposals. Their Medicare proposal "makes it easier to commit waste, fraud and abuse, but harder for the poorest, the oldest and the sickest seniors to make sure their health care needs are met. That is wrong. I don't like it. And if it passes, I will veto it," he said to a standing ovation.

The Republicans' Medicaid proposal cuts money for the health needs of elders, the disabled and children, he said. One of every five children in the country receives Medicaid, he added, "and 20 years from now they're either going to be in jail or in school or in the workplace . . . when I retire I want them out there making lots of money, taking care of me. And I want to take care of their health right now."

The Medicaid proposal is so mean-spirited, he said, that it would allow states to tell the spouse of an elderly person who needs care to "sell your car, sell your house, clean out your bank account, give it to us and then we'll give you a little help. We don't know how you're going to live."

Education also would take hits along with public safety, he said, but the worst provision is a return to the 1980s practice of allowing companies to take pension funds for any reason they want.

"If it takes a veto, you'll have it, but I need you in the streets standing up for America's future," Clinton said before leaving the hall to another standing ovation.

Labor looks to technology, solidarity

By Muriel H. Cooper
New York

With a backdrop reflecting the diversity of the labor movement, its members and their work, the AFL-CIO opened its 21st constitutional convention with a music video that declared, "We are the ones who answer the call."

The excitement of technology and the solidarity with all American workers were reflected throughout the convention with the largest attendance in history — 1,014 delegates representing 79 international unions, nine trade and industrial departments, 48 state federations and 454 central labor councils. Another 320 alternates were credentialed.

The backdrop, which ran the length of the podium, emphasized the four recurring themes for the AFL-CIO's Stand UP for America's Working Families campaign — good jobs, good wages, health and safety and a real voice on the job.

The music video came with an original song written for the convention by labor troubadour John McCutcheon, emphasizing the signature theme — "Stand UP for our families, Stand UP, Stand UP for America, Stand UP."

The video showcased labor at its best — organizing workers, fighting for health and safety on the job and decent wages, marching for dignity, and working and building their communities.

"Just think of what this economy in New York City would be like without the good-paying, decent jobs and protections of collective bargaining," said Brian McLaughlin, president of the New York City AFL-CIO, as he welcomed delegates.

"The hopes and dreams of millions of children in this city and their parents depend upon us being strong and unified and participating to the fullest in the political process, defending our rights while paving the way for a future with dignity for others."

This year's convention included several innovative features to promote inclusiveness throughout the labor movement, often with a technological aspect.

The Stand UP Action Center was a communications and political action room where delegates could contact their congressional representatives on important bills being considered while the convention was in progress.

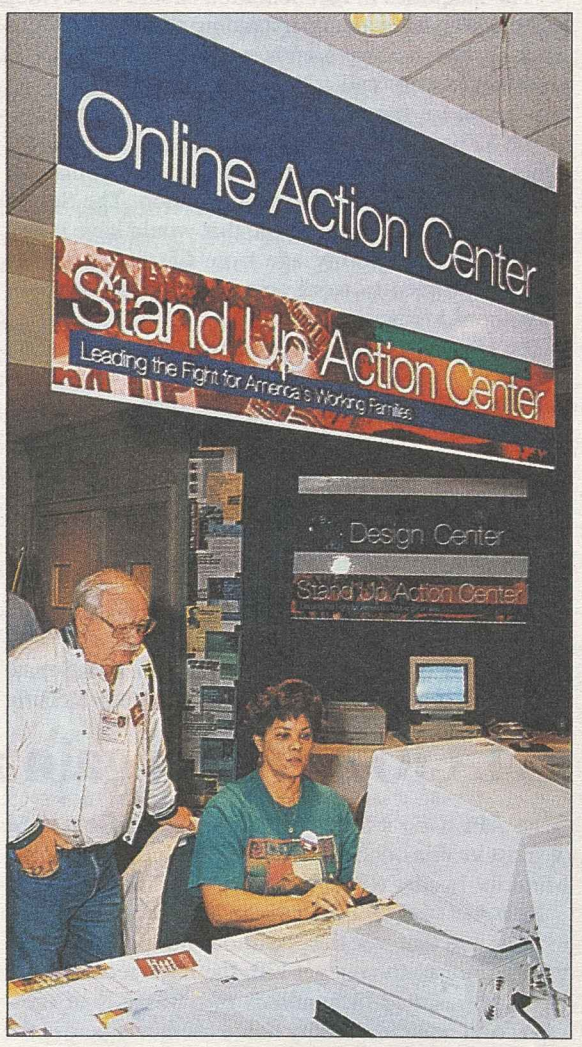
Listening to a "live" televised remote broadcast to the convention floor from the center, delegates were provided an up-to-date list of pending legislative issues on Capitol Hill, including Medicare and Medicaid, student loans, corporate pension withdrawals and the budget reconciliation bill.

Delegates could use the center to go online to send computer-generated messages, compose fliers and use the phone bank to call Congress.

Monsignor George G. Higgins, "labor's priest," talked about keeping the faith in his invocation. "Effective labor unions are still by far the most powerful force in society for the protection of workers' rights and the improvement of his or her condition," he said.

New York State AFL-CIO President Edward J. Cleary reminded the delegates of the part that the city has played in labor history. "This great metropolis is steeped in the struggles of the American labor movement and the working class," he said. "As we go about our work at this convention, let us resolve more than ever to be one movement and to speak and to act as one movement."

The opening presentation also reflected the future, with actress Carol Woods performing the national anthem and then accompanying the multicultural Tada Youth Choir in singing "America the Beautiful."



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Susan Washington, associate director of the AFL-CIO Department of Legislation, shows a delegate how to use the computer to send a message to Congress.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

A giant marionette of Mother Jones leads a demonstration of strikers through the convention hall.

Strikers embraced with solidarity

Convention pledges support, money to aid families

By James B. Parks
New York

Workers involved in long-running strikes across the country received an emotional outpouring of support from convention delegates after a demonstration through the hall.

Striking and locked-out workers from the Detroit News and Free Press, A.E. Staley, Boeing, Las Vegas Frontier, Bridgestone/Firestone, Alitalia, Bayou Steel, Bell Atlantic and Caterpillar marched through the convention hall led by a replica of legendary activist Mother Jones.

"While this convention is properly dedicated to the important task of debating and deciding the future direction of the labor movement, it would be wrong if we distance ourselves from the daily struggle of the rank-and-file members and their families," AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney said.

The convention expression of solidarity with the strikers calls upon union members and "decent-minded people" to refrain from doing business with these companies and their corporate allies.

"These companies shall be made to pay a price every bit as dear as that which they seek to impose on their workers," the resolution declared. "Standing together, in solidarity, we shall prevail."

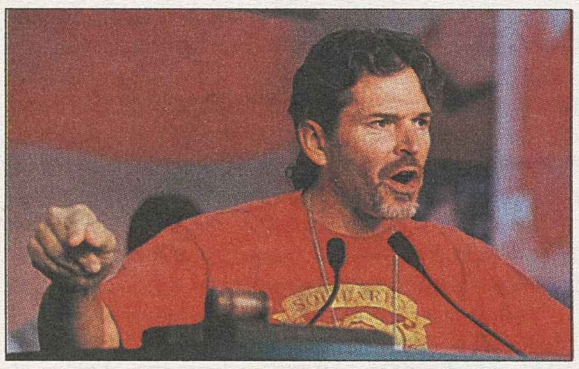
Steelworkers President George Becker said the resolution was one of the most important the convention would consider "because it talks about resources; it talks about strategic efforts and what we need to do to draw the people together and to bring the power of the union so that we can . . . get decent settlements."

Before the convention voted on the resolution, several of the strikers reported to the convention on the progress of their disputes, but none more eloquently than Dan Lane, a Paperworker from Decatur, Ill., who has been on a hunger strike since Sept. 1 in an effort to dramatize the plight of 760 locked-out workers at Staley.

"After almost two-and-a-half years in Decatur, where I live, over 4,000 workers are either on a lockout, strike or without contracts — 4,000 of a community of 90,000. In central Illinois over the past three years, there have been almost 100,000 workers that have been put in that situation. If you don't believe there's an attack on our way of life, if you believe that corporations want to be fair, look at central Illinois. Look at Decatur," he said.

"And unless — unless you stand up . . . and say, 'That's my brother in Decatur, that's my brother in Wichita, that's my brother in Detroit,' and you come to our financial aid and you come to our struggle and you make a decision on Pepsi-Cola. By God, if I can do without food for 60 days, you can do without Pepsi," he said, referring to the UPIU's corporate campaign to convince PepsiCo, Staley's largest customer, to withdraw its business until the workers receive a fair contract.

Al Derey, president of the Detroit Metropolitan Council of Newspaper Unions, reported that the walkout by 2,500 employees at the Free Press and News is not about money. "This strike is about working conditions, family values, a decent living and the integrity of the worker. The workers certainly don't run those newspapers, but they certainly make them run," he said.



Staley hunger striker Dan Lane

"The real truth is that they want a union-free environment. They want low wages, and they want no benefits. They want us to return to the conditions that the union movement fought for over 40 years to attain. Our members said no, and they are standing up fighting for their rights out there."

As a result of the corporate campaign waged by the AFL-CIO and the unions, some 337 advertisers have pulled their ads from the papers, he said.

Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Vice President John Wilhelm reported that employees of Box Tree restaurant in New York City have been out on strike for 23 months, seeking a first contract. "It's living proof that organizing can't stop when we win legal recognition," he said.

Some 550 Frontier Hotel workers in Las Vegas have been out for four years, Wilhelm said, and "275 of them still walk their weekly picket hours every week."

The need for solidarity was brought home by Roger Gates, president of the USWA local in Decatur, one of the locals that offered to return to work at Bridgestone/Firestone in May. Some 1,000 of 3,000 workers were allowed to return and the rest have been "permanently replaced." Talks in the dispute resume Nov. 6.

"We've organized Decatur, we've become united. We have a solidarity movement between the three locals (UAW on strike at Caterpillar and UPIU at Staley)," Gates said. "We need a solidarity movement nationwide, worldwide. No matter how big or how small the union is in this day, they need help. One union can't fight these multinationals. They're too big, they have too much money. We've got the people. The people have got to come together."

Communications Workers President Morton Bahr admonished the convention to go beyond words and to support the strikers with money. "We have enough international unions in this hall that if we just asked our employees . . . as well as our staff, we could take care of every striking family, not only in Decatur but around this country," he said.

Several unions showed their solidarity by announcing gifts to the strikers. AFSCME districts in Illinois donated $15,000 to the Detroit strikers and AFSCME in Pennsylvania gave $1,200 to the Staley workers. The Letter Carriers donated $25,000 and three unions — the Laborers, Operating Engineers and Painters — together donated $25,000 for all the strikers .

Delegates decry worsening gap in U.S. wages

By Muriel H. Cooper
New York

Convention delegates strongly denounced the worsening state of the U.S. economy, in which the rich get richer and workers generally are getting poorer.

"While corporate profits soar to record levels, the buying power of American workers' wages continues to go down, despite big gains in productivity," a resolution on the economic situation stated.

A second resolution noted that, along with the widening gap between the haves and the have-nots, nearly 1 million workers are single wage-earners, trying to support their families on the minimum wage.

"It wasn't too long ago that working families in America could look to the future with confidence," said Betty Bednarczyk from the Service Employees during the floor debate on the resolutions. "For many, if not all working people, the American dream was a reality, but the American dream has become a nightmare.

"Household income is going nowhere," she said. "The latest data from the census show that eight out of 10 households are behind where they were in 1989. The labor movement must show them the way out. We must provide the explanations and we must show them how to fight back."

The resolution on the economic situation called for full employment, lower interest rates, public investment, fair taxes, strengthening labor standards and the safety net for the unemployed, stopping the export of jobs, harnessing technology to serve workers, addressing the problems of inner cities and the growing underclass and stopping harmful deregulation.

The resolution properly deals with the issue of workers' standard of living in terms of high-wage and high-skilled jobs, said Machinists President George J. Kourpias.

"The issue of our whole strike at Boeing is about the future of this country," he said, referring to the Oct. 5 strike of 32,000 IAM members as a response to the company sending more and more jobs overseas.

"Right now, the back end of the 737 is being built in China," he said. "Thirty percent of the 777 is being built in Japan. There's a factory in China with 30,000 people doing this work for McDonnell Douglas and for Boeing making $50 a month. Aerospace workers in America are being asked to compete with them."

The second resolution supported "raising the minimum wage, and the right of all working people to rise above poverty when performing full-time work."

"I feel like we should do some of the things that were done back in days of the vigilantes, when they were raising so much wheat and they couldn't get it to the market, and this woman said, 'Let's stop raising so much wheat and let's raise more hell,' " said Ophelia McFadden of the SEIU. "And I think we should do that and raise these minimum wages."

Speaking from the chair, President Tom Donahue said the country needs a wealth tax that equalizes the distribution of income, because those who hold large sums of wealth do not pay their fair share.

"One-half of 1 percent of the people in this nation now hold almost one-third of the total wealth of this nation," he said. "This nation holds $22 trillion in total wealth. That one-half of 1 percent holds $7 trillion, and their holdings have gone up from $2 trillion to $3 trillion in the pre-Reagan years, to $7 trillion today.

"I think it's a matter of our resolve to push for the biggest and the largest wealth tax that can be assessed," Donahue said. "That's a terrible uphill struggle in the Congress as presently constituted, I know. But it's a struggle that this federation ought to wage."

"We have given them trillions of dollars of our money over the last 13 to 14 years. We ought to start taking some of it back, and this is a way to do it, and I commend it to your attention," Donahue told the delegates to a burst of applause.

During the final day of the convention, a number of committee reports governing public policy resolutions were adopted, including those pressing for protecting the Fair Labor Standards Act, reforming immigration policy, fighting sweatshops, supporting affirmative action and eliminating child labor. A resolution on diversity and full participation in the workplace also was adopted, as was one urging establishment of a bill of rights and responsibilities for learning.

Leaders debate future course, tactics for labor

By James B. Parks
New York

AFL-CIO presidential candidates John J. Sweeney and Tom Donahue debated for two lively hours at the New York convention — with virtual unanimity on where U.S. unions need to go and spirited disagreement on how to get there.

Each candidate charted his vision of how much the AFL-CIO could do to gain new members, communicate better and improve its political and legislative machinery. On those and other topics, they debated the role of the federation vs. the role of the affiliates and the proper mode of federation conduct to attract the public support needed to achieve labor's goals.

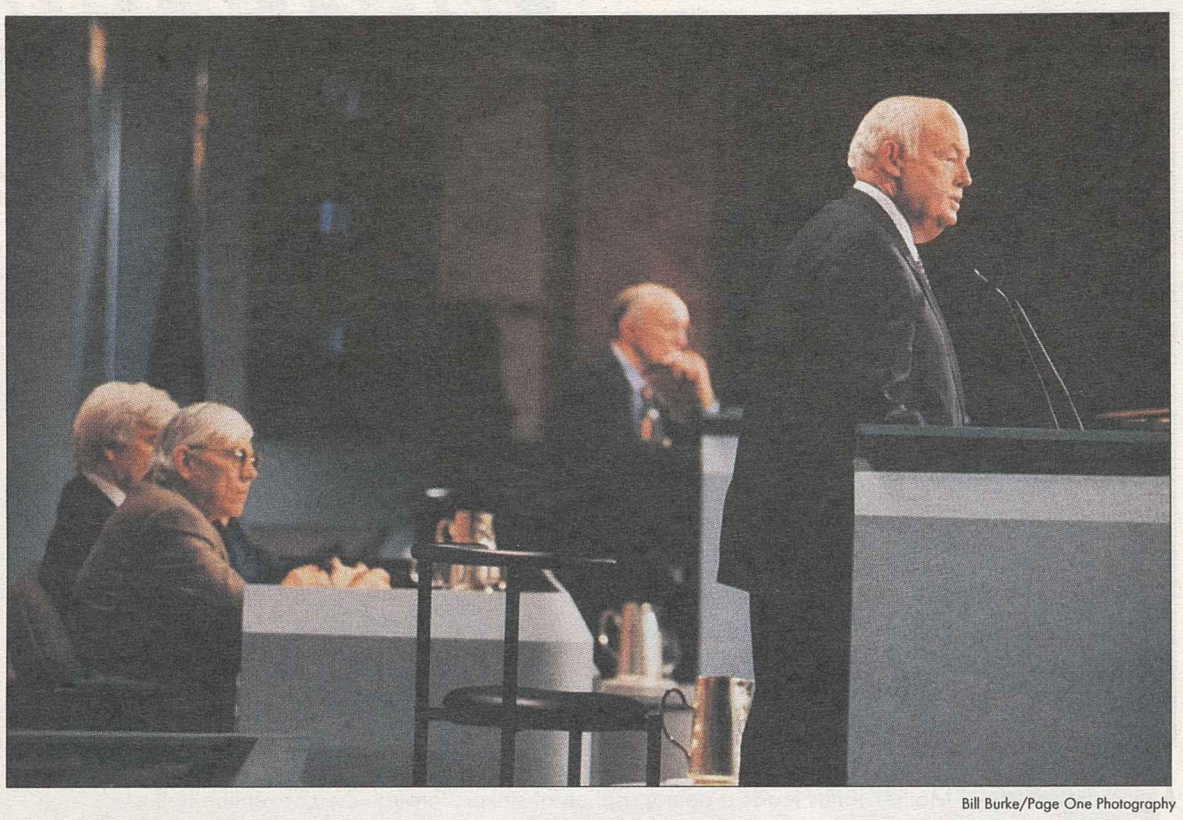
Sweeney said he ran for president because "organized labor is the only voice of American workers and their families and the silence is deafening." He said workers ask "why is nobody speaking up for me," and in frustration look for leadership from demagogues like Rush Limbaugh and Patrick Buchanan.

Donahue said that during 15 years on the Executive Council, Sweeney "never raised a whisper" about what he now calls "useless programs and departments," and has become the voice of "those who believe they have a monopoly on the truth and that they know the way forward — to shout louder and break down the system."

Donahue said militance will "quicken the pulse of trade unionists," but unions must appeal to the entire work force, and that the Sweeney program would "marginalize us and consign us to the fringes of society for generations to come."

Sweeney said the AFL-CIO has become "a Washington-based institution instead of a worker-based movement." That means too much talk and too little action, so it is time "the federation was led by people with frontline experience, who can represent younger workers and have lived outside Washington."

The debate was moderated by Al Hunt of the Wall Street Journal, with two other journalists, Michelle Amber of the BNA Daily Labor Report and Kenneth Crowe of Newsday, questioning the candidates. The debate was held Tuesday afternoon, finishing about 24 hours before the balloting was completed and Sweeney's election was announced to the convention.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Tom Donahue listens as John J. Sweeney makes a point during the AFL-CIO presidential debate.

Sweeney said the federation must "commit massive resources to organizing, and create a separate department of organizing to coordinate and focus the federation's organizing activities." To a question about an ideological labor movement, Sweeney said, "our movement should be opened up and the dialogue should be as wide as we possibly can make it." He credited his own campaign with "bringing movement back into the labor movement."

Donahue, on the other hand, said the movement is "worker-based, directed at workers' needs on the job . . . to improve their conditions of life, their conditions of work. Secondarily, we are forced to change society . . . for the benefit of all."

On the source of the $20 million each has pledged to spend annually on organizing, Sweeney said the AFL-CIO has enough resources to put additional monies into organizing without any per capita tax increase. Donahue countered that the federation spends all the $65 million a year it takes in, and vowed to "raise $20 million a year from the proceeds of our licensing arrangements" and other methods to avoid cutting other AFL-CIO programs.

The political climate can only be addressed by being "enormously active in grass-roots politics, beefing up our campaigns in every way we can," Donahue said. "The global economics we now face can be dealt with by engaging on trade issues" and forcing the Clinton administration to insist on workers' rights provisions in trade agreements.

On multiple worker problems, Sweeney said, the key is improved political effectiveness. "We have to look at the ways we can strengthen our political position and involve our grass-roots activists in political campaigns to develop candidates and to support candidates so we can turn Congress around." Both candidates predicted a turnaround in the 1996 election and a labor endorsement for the re-election of Clinton.

Both candidates also predicted that the passion of their respective campaigns did not mean the labor movement would be split.

"I sincerely believe that Tom's supporters as well as my supporters are interested in a united, solid labor movement. Both sides are going to have to do some work to reduce some of the pain that has been created during this campaign," Sweeney said.

Donahue said that his "entire campaign is based upon bringing this movement together in unity."

Trumka, Easterling contrast experience, vision in debate

By David Kameras
New York

Barbara J. Easterling pointed to her experience, while Richard L. Trumka said the time had come for a new generation of leadership.

With that, the candidates for AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer contrasted their qualifications for the job and their respective visions of labor's future.

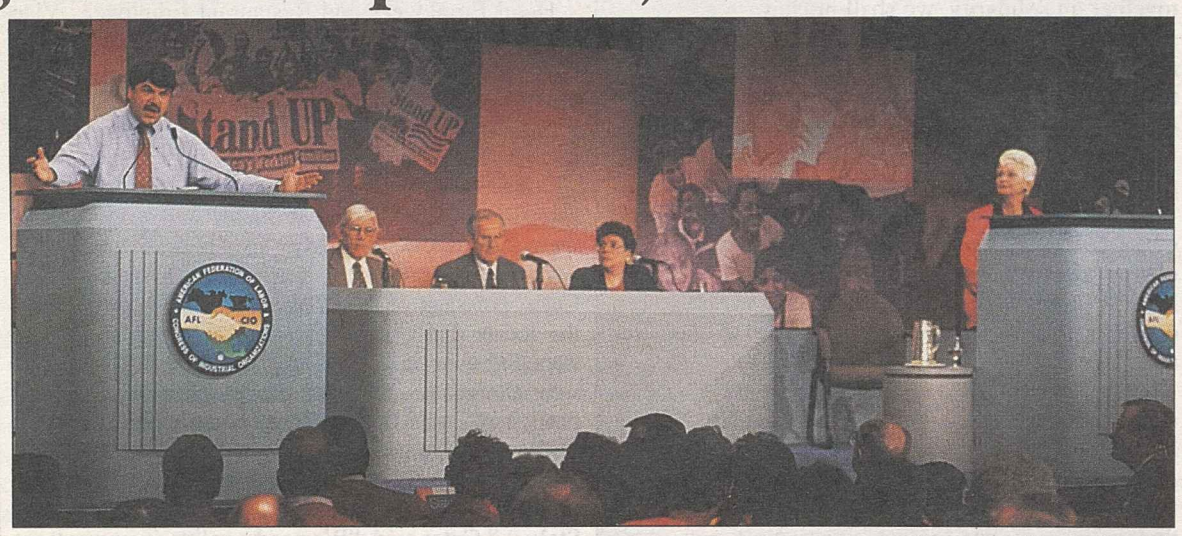
Easterling, the Communications Workers secretary-treasurer who was elected to the same job at the AFL-CIO Aug. 1, said in her opening statement that her experience proved "I've prepared myself at every step. I am the best-qualified candidate for this position."

Trumka, the Mine Workers president who serves as an AFL-CIO vice president and chairs its Strategic Approaches Committee, said the federation needed a "leadership which is not so invested in the policies of the past that it is unable to make the tough choices. There are those who tell us it's better to run from fights than to take a stand because we can't afford to lose."

"I decided to run because I think of all those who have had to fight one battle after another just to help our membership understand the importance and the potential of this federation in a way that some others don't," Trumka said. "Nothing is more important right now than bringing the institution of collective bargaining to every single worker out there."

Easterling described her financial management experience and initiatives she took to overhaul the secretary-treasurer's office at CWA, resulting in $2 million in savings that were put into organizing, and said she would continue the same level of savings at the AFL-CIO.

"I bring to this position the life experiences of someone who knows what it means to be a working woman, to care for a family, hold down a full-time job and still participate in her union," Easterling said. "As women in this room know, I had to work twice as hard as the men, be twice as tough and all the while look twice as good. Fortunately, it wasn't that difficult."



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

Secretary-treasurer candidates Richard L. Trumka and Barbara J. Easterling answered questions raised by a panel including, from left, Kenneth Crowe, former USWA President Lynn Williams and Michelle Amber.

Trumka said that thanks to solidarity in the movement, 18,000 coal miners on strike two years ago benefited from the support of trade union families across America. "Same as you were always there for us, the United Mine Workers of America has been, is now and always will be there for you, and so will Rich Trumka," he said.

"We can't let solidarity be some slogan that we dust off every now and then," Trumka said.

Easterling spoke of her extensive family history of union activism and sacrifice. "I'll always be the telephone operator that worked in Akron, Ohio," she said. "I'll never forget where I came from."

Trumka said the AFL-CIO had failed to deliver the message that workers are a majority, not a minority, allowing their opponents to define them. "We're not irrelevant," he said. "We're the only hope that the middle class has right now."

Like the presidential candidates in their earlier debate, both Easterling and Trumka stressed organizing.

Easterling noted that part-time, temporary and contingent workers are the fastest-growing portion of the work force in the United States, including many women. "I will speak for them," she said. Trumka said, "what we have to do is have the AFL-CIO stop saying that organizing is everybody else's job. It's all of our jobs, and it starts with the AFL-CIO."

Both candidates saw the virtue in promoting union mergers and withholding support from politicians who don't stand with workers.

Constitutional changes focus on leadership

By David Kameras
New York

Delegates to the AFL-CIO convention made a number of substantial changes to the federation's constitution that will have a significant impact on how its mission is fulfilled.

Most visible is the composition of the leadership team, with the addition of an executive vice president — and the election to that office of Linda Chavez-Thompson — and expansion of the number of vice presidents from 33 to 51, with 10 seats designated for women and people of color. **(See story, Page 1).**

Delegates also voted to give state AFL-CIOs representation on the federation's General Board, elected on a regional basis, with details to be worked out by the Executive Council.

In addition, the convention resolved to eliminate specific language for the Department of Organization and Field Services, the only constitutionally mandated department, and instead to give authority and discretion to the president "to provide the direction, the staff, the resources necessary to conduct such activities."

The move clears the way for AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney to establish a department singularly focused on organizing, a major platform in his campaign.

The convention voted to defer to the Executive Council an amendment to place an age limit of 70 at the time of election on persons seeking an executive officer position. Sweeney, 61, indicated that regardless of the council's recommendation, "if re-elected, I personally will not seek to remain in this office beyond the age limit that we have proposed."

Delegates also voted to empower the Executive Council to adopt an ethical practices code, while providing for "an appropriate enforcement system and appropriate sanctions," whereby the council would have recourse to alternatives other than expulsion. The code was proposed by pre-convention President Tom Donahue, who had ushered the proposal to Executive Council approval.

Delegates had voted Oct. 23 to postpone the amendment for the executive vice president post until after the election for other offices. Steelworkers President George Becker, secretary of the Constitution Committee, complained in the minority report that the issue had become "wrapped up in the campaign for president of the AFL-CIO."

The delay was approved on a roll call vote: 7,245,000 from 33 unions in favor of postponement and 5,756,078 from 45 unions opposed. The Constitution Committee originally had recommended by an 8-6 vote to reject the proposed amendment, Bricklayers President John T. Joyce, the committee chair, told the delegates.

The decision to expand the Executive Council to 54 — 51 vice presidents plus three executive officers — came after delegates rejected, by a roll call vote of 5,686,152 to 7,315,388, a resolution to expand the council to 78 and include principal officers from each affiliated union.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Through three votes on constitutional issues, delegates maintained a partisan split favoring the presidential campaign of John J. Sweeney. In the end, they agreed to a "Unity Slate" of 51 vice presidents.

The two presidential candidates — Donahue and Sweeney — had presented the convention with different structures for the Executive Council. Sweeney proposed a 45-member council while Donahue called for 78, one from each union, and the Executive Council had voted before the convention for a "plus six" formula to assure representation of women and people of color.

On behalf of the Sweeney campaign, Becker moved to table the 45-seat proposal, bringing the 78-seat council to a vote.

While urging the convention to expand the council to include principal officers of each affiliate, AFT President Albert Shanker warned that a vote against the amendment would mean that a decision made months ago to allow all international presidents to attend and speak at council meetings "says that while they may come and they may listen and they may speak, they may not vote."

Chemical Workers President Frank Martino noted that his union has responded to every appeal of the council to assist other unions, regardless of size, and that "I've never given a damn whether I was on the Executive Council or not." But "now that you've made an issue of it with this resolution, I resent the fact that you're telling me I'm not good enough to sit on that council because I come from a small union."

"Because I come from a big union, it doesn't necessarily mean that I deserve a place there when many others more deserving should have had it," said UFCW President Douglas Dority, who noted that the pre-existing configuration excludes several industries, such as airline and rail transportation and fire fighters.

"Why are some of our voices locked out?" asked Gregory Junemann of the Professional and Technical Engineers. "We not only want to be in the house — we would also like to be at the table."

Arguing against the proposed amendment, Michael Jurnigan of the Portsmouth CLC said the proposal would create "a powerful disincentive for future consolidation efforts," with union mergers resulting in the loss of council seats. The result would be an exclusive club of top officers, argued Laura Gordon of the Western North Carolina AFL-CIO.

Some opponents said a large Executive Council would be unwieldy, and would "make the AFL-CIO top-heavy," according to Morgan Bayless of the Lexington and Bluegrass Area AFL-CIO. "There's no way to avoid that if more than 70 principal officers are involved," said Gary Mertig of the Ashland (Ky.) Area federation.

Others said the diversity objective wouldn't be adequately addressed. "We can't simply give it to the international unions to elect minorities or women as presidents of those internationals," said Warren Gould of the New Haven AFL-CIO.

"This is a process which in fact will dilute diversity," said AFSCME Secretary-Treasurer William Lucy, who also is president of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists. "It does not require new math to understand that five or six or seven out of 33 is better than five or six or seven out of 78." While women and minorities occasionally may be elected to head unions and qualify for a seat, "that would be about as rare as a chicken with teeth."

A variety of technical amendments also were adopted, including one deleting from the constitution a provision requiring that the nomination and election of executive officers be limited to the third and fourth days, thereby allowing the convention to move its agenda forward by one day.

Donahue opens convention stressing unity, communication

By James B. Parks
New York

The AFL-CIO's 21st constitutional convention opened with a plea by President Tom Donahue to "lift up labor and give it back its strength" by listening to its members and coming together in solidarity and political action.

The historic convention marks "a rebirth of this workers' movement," Donahue said. "Millions depend on us, whether they know it or not, to help build a better workplace, with better wages, in a better, more decent and more truly humane world. If we don't do it, no one else will," he said.

To successfully fight for workers, the movement must be unified, Donahue said. "It's true that we come here today divided on the issue of who will lead us over the next two years. But on Thursday, let there be no question that when we leave this hall to carry on our work, we must do so with our divisions healed, our strength enhanced and our federation more united than ever before," he said.

"The essential strength of this federation has always been with its unions and their members," Donahue said. "There is no savior waiting in the wings. There is no plumed knight who will shatter the nation's power structure with the force of words alone."

Organizing must be the primary mission of the federation, he said. "In coming years, this federation will raise and spend millions of new dollars for massive, multiunion organizing drives that will target entire industries and geographic regions."

At the same time, Donahue warned that the movement must not get caught up in the political and racial polarization in the country but should "refocus our membership on the critical economic issues — on jobs and education and opportunity. Let's not get them lost in the present wilderness of hype, backlash and dirty politics. I firmly believe that we can restore the faith of America's workers in the American system by showing them not what divides them, but what unites them — and what unites them is the fight for a better life."

"We simply have to reach our members, educate them, help them discover common bonds with their brothers and sisters, and help them focus on the 1996 campaign and on electing a Congress and state legislatures that will care about the hard-working majority of our people," he said.

The real enemies of working people are the "economic royalists in the board rooms who intimidate the unorganized — who force union workers to strike and then attempt to permanently replace them with scabs. Our real enemies are the legions of lawyers, lobbyists, fixers and other parasites whose stock in trade is showing companies how they can bend and break the labor laws and get away with it," Donahue said.

"Backing up all of them are the reactionaries who — for the time being and for the time being only — have taken control of the Congress and are hell-bent on destroying all that our movement has fought and struggled for across the generations," he said.

"We will not let them have their selfish way. We will not tolerate their campaign of contempt for working Americans. We will not let them repeal the ban on company unions. We will not let them repeal the eight-hour day. We will not let them repeal Davis-Bacon and the Service Contract Act. We will not let them snuff out OSHA. We will not let them slash college loan programs for the middle class — and the Earned Income Tax Credit that gives modest help to the working poor."

Donahue praised President Clinton as "someone who has proven himself to be a friend of America's working families." And in the 1996 election, besides re-electing Clinton, "this labor movement is going to be with him every step of the way, fighting to send (House Speaker Newt) Gingrich and his mean-spirited, rubber-stamping reactionaries back home where they belong."

Reich: Unions are answer to social ills

Labor secretary decries GOP threats to workers

By David Kameras
New York

Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich, greeted by American labor as one of its own, urged convention delegates to "organize, mobilize and energize to restore the American dream to all of America."

Appearing Oct. 26, on the fourth and final day of the gathering, Reich described many of the challenges facing American workers today.

"Half of the workers in the United States have not received a wage increase in 15 years, if you consider inflation," he said. "Their health care benefits are drying up, their pensions are vanishing."

Real annual household income has gone up an average per household of $2,000 since 1979, he reported. Yet "about 97 percent of all of that growth in family income over the past 15 years has gone to families in the top fifth. All of the rest, four-fifths of American families, have shared just 3 percent of the total growth in family income."

"Now, the rich are getting ahead, but most of the rest of us are getting nowhere," he said. "In the space of a single generation, the phrase 'job security' has become a quaint phrase of a bygone era."

Reich noted that when two large New York banks announced their merger, "Wall Street let out a hearty cheer. Hurrah for the corporate CEOs who engineered this deal. Three cheers for the lawyers and all the investment bankers that put it together. Hip-hip-hooray for the shareholders.

"And what about the 12,000 men and women who will be losing their jobs in this deal?" he asked. "Wall Street is having a ball right now, but what about the people?"

Reich warned that the Republican agenda "is designed for people who put more money in the stock market than into the supermarket. We cannot let them prevail."

The government's top labor official presented a long list of programs and policies that the GOP wants to eliminate, and promised that they would be greeted with a presidential veto.

"Their next plan is to put me out of work by shutting down the entire Labor Department," he said. "The Department of Labor is . . . here to stay, Mr. Speaker, because organized labor is here to stay."

Reich described the many workplace fatalities that occur during a typical workweek and led the assembly in a moment of silence. "But let us never be silent when cynical souls tell us that working people do not need protection on the job," he said.

"You are an enormous part of the answer. The opposite of division, the opposite of separation, the opposite of coming apart, the opposite of disintegration is union," Reich said as delegates stood and cheered.

"Continue to take your message to the offices, to the factories, to the stores, to the hospitals, to the restaurants, to the sweatshops, to the streets of America," he said. "Continue to fight for dignity. Let your voices be heard. Stand up strong. Fight for dignity. Demand respect. Your country needs you."



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney and Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich acknowledge cheers of the delegates.

Delegates pledge to resist budget cuts

New York

Convention delegates approved two substitute resolutions that assailed the Republican leadership in Congress and legislation harmful to working families.

One measure, replacing proposals submitted by the AFT and the Connecticut AFL-CIO, calls on the administration and members of Congress to "resist harmful and unfair Republican budget cuts," noting that workers would be among the worst victims of proposals to cut deeply into the budgets of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the National Labor Relations Board, as well as efforts to encourage corporate raids on pension funds.

Additionally, "older people and retirees will suffer from the proposed deep Medicare cuts, while low-wage workers and poor people will be harmed by welfare cutbacks and rollback of the Earned Income Tax Credit," reported Government Employees President John N. Sturdivant, chair of the Resolutions Committee. "Hard-pressed state and local budgets will be hurt badly by the loss of federal funds. Corporate welfare will be untouched by the proposed cuts."

Speaking on the resolution, New York AFL-CIO President Edward J. Cleary told of the adverse effect budget cuts are having at the state and local levels.

"Our towns are being shortchanged. Our cities are being shortchanged," he said. "We're seeing people that supported us on prevailing wage turning their backs. We're seeing people that were supporting the construction of schools turning their backs. We're seeing our roads and we're seeing our bridges fall to disrepair."

"Republicans are . . . cutting our worker training, slashing OSHA, slashing also other benefits that workers are entitled to," warned Steelworkers Vice President Leon Lynch.

"A lot of people think that simply because they have good jobs now, that things are in good shape with them now because the economy is going well," he said. "But if they just look around the corner, they're going to find that it's quite possible the private employment agents that are on stream today will end up taking their jobs away and replacing them with workers who are making just above the minimum wage."

"I say that we should hold all politicians accountable when they sell our jobs to exploit cheap labor, and we should hold them accountable in this trade union house," declared Jaime Martinez of the Electronic Workers.

Richard Seward of the Fairbanks (Alaska) AFL-CIO condemned the GOP budget package, but praised opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil exploration and development, a move he said would create a quarter of a million union jobs throughout the country.

After adopting the resolution, the convention moved on to a measure substituting for three offered by the Service Employees, the AFT and AFSCME calling on the AFL-CIO "to wage a vigorous campaign to defeat (the GOP) effort to undermine the Medicare and Medicaid programs and urges the president to veto any legislation containing these harsh cuts," Sturdivant reported. "It reminds the Congress that the ultimate resolution to problems with Medicare lies in the reform of the entire health care system."

"I think it's clear that the labor councils and the labor state affiliates and the national AFL-CIO have to stand up and stand tall to fight these cuts in Medicare to show that we are on the side of all workers in the community, most of whom are not in unions," said Candace Owley, who heads the nursing division of the AFT.

Rosemary Trump of SEIU agreed. "If, in fact, this Republican initiative in Congress does go through, we will make Medicare and Medicaid have the potential to destabilize the health care system on which every American depends. Every American's health care will be at risk.

"The health safety net would be shredded. Many hospitals, especially public hospitals, will probably have to close their doors, throwing thousands of health care workers out on the street and depriving communities of important specialized services. Those that survive will be required to take care of more patients with fewer people, a recipe for disaster," she said.

"What a great wealth the United States has, and it can't afford to help support the 30 million people that need medical coverage," said Anthony Ceraldi of the Asbestos Workers.

In a final rush to complete its business, the convention also adopted committee reports urging fair taxes, defeat of proposals to gut OSHA and MSHA and safeguarding Social Security and Medicaid.

— David Kameras

Worker rights in trade urged

The AFL-CIO convention called for the United States to insist that worker rights be included in all trade agreements.

The resolution on international trade and investment recognizes the need for a new, more realistic framework for coordinating a world trade relationship. But, while pushing for reciprocity, balance and fairness in expanded trade, the convention said worker rights must be a central part of the exchange.

Addressing that issue at the convention, Bill Jordan, secretary general of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, pledged to work with the AFL-CIO to fight for a social clause in all international trading agreements.

International labor will demand that no country has a right to trade with the civilized world if it refuses to allow freedom of association, collective bargaining and equality of opportunity, or refuses to outlaw child labor or forced labor, he said.

"Our campaign is telling politicians that without a social clause, there can be no fair trade," Jordan said. "And without fair trade, there is no free trade.

"Brothers, sisters, in such a world we must remove the borders to our thinking," he said. "The ICFTU regularly supports campaigns to force companies to recognize unions and come to the bargaining table. Here in the U.S.A., we've been involved in many such cases, UMWA's Pittston and BCOA strikes and the USWA's Ravenswood lockout; but in tomorrow's world we must be able to mount a picket line that can reach across the world."

On its final day, the convention also adopted committee reports to approve resolutions demanding revocation of favored trading status for China, support for the peace process in the Middle East and Northern Ireland, and tying any relaxation of the embargo with Cuba to improvements in human and worker rights.

Sweeney, labor look forward after convention

Continued from Page 1

demonstrations and sophisticated corporate campaigns to make their labor rights the civil rights issue of the 1990s," he said.

"We're going to do whatever it takes, work as hard as it takes and stick with it as long as it takes, to help American workers win the right to speak for themselves in strong unions."

That aggressive style was apparent in Trumka, the Mine Workers president who, at 46, was the youngest member of the pre-convention Executive Council. He promised "more energy, more excitement and more passion than you've seen in a long time."

Chavez-Thompson, 51, a second-generation American of Mexican descent who rose to become a vice president of AFSCME on the strength of her organizing ability, was expected to serve as the primary liaison with the state and local AFL-CIOs in her new position, making them a stronger arm of the federation.

"They felt they had been forgotten," Chavez-Thompson said. "Unless and until we go to the trenches — ask their opinions and find out what their problems are — we won't be able to build the labor movement into a stronger, leaner, meaner machine."

Organizing was the principal plank of the Sweeney platform, and the new administration moved quickly to begin developing the capacity to bring in more members, securing convention clearance for an Organizing Department separate from the federation's field services division.

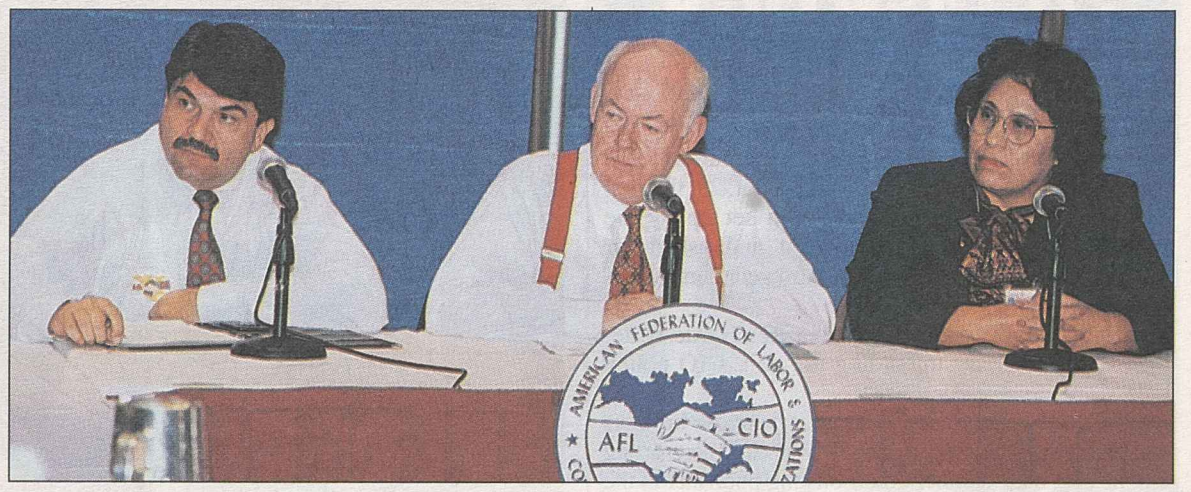
The Executive Council already has approved a special fund that eventually will grow to at least $20 million a year to help stimulate organizing activity, but Trumka declared that the federation would be much more involved in that activity than in the past. "Organizing is a joint responsibility of the AFL-CIO, the affiliates and every one of the rank-and-file members," Trumka told reporters.

"You will see us doing strategic analysis with the affiliates, doing actual organizing with them, training organizers and deploying organizers. You will see us launching coordinated organizing campaigns," he said.

Trumka promised that organizing directors of affiliated unions would be part of the planning process, "so that instead of butting heads and wasting resources fighting each other, we can do it together."

Sweeney said the new administration "will be moving as quickly as we can, but in all fairness to a group of new officers, we do need time to review all the programs of the AFL-CIO and to consult with our new Executive Council before we make any announcements as to where the priorities are going to be focused initially."

Sweeney told the council he hoped to have a 1996 budget ready for a December council meeting.



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Richard L. Trumka, President John J. Sweeney and Executive Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson meet the press on the convention's final day in New York.

New leadership team takes reins in historic vote

By James B. Parks
New York

John J. Sweeney of the Service Employees was elected the fourth president of the AFL-CIO in an historic vote that saw both top offices change hands, and the later creation of a third executive office.

Along with Sweeney, Richard L. Trumka of the Mine Workers was elected secretary-treasurer and Linda Chavez-Thompson of AFSCME was elected executive vice president, a position created with a constitutional change approved by acclamation after Sweeney and Trumka were elected.

Sweeney, president of SEIU for 15 years, defeated President Tom Donahue, also an SEIU member, by a 7,286,837 to 5,716,165 margin. Trumka defeated Secretary-Treasurer Barbara J. Easterling, a Communications Worker and the first woman to hold a federation executive office, by 7,341,669 to 5,661,333.

Sweeney said the election of a unity slate for the Executive Council is a "great step in binding up the wounds that have been inflicted over the past few months. As your president, I will never forget that our movement grows by multiplication and addition and not by division and subtraction."

Stressing solidarity and unity, Sweeney recalled former President George Meany's 1955 statement at the final convention of the AFL that "I am sure that there is enough wisdom, enough common sense, enough dedication and loyalty to the principles of our movement both in the AFL and the CIO to make this work."

He also said he would not forget former President Lane Kirkland's advice to the 1989 AFL-CIO convention that "solidarity has been our shield against the most primitive and the most sophisticated assaults by agents of avarice and exploitation."

Sweeney, 61, is a native of New York City. After graduating from Iona College with a degree in economics, he went to work for the Ladies' Garment Workers.

In 1960, he was hired by Donahue as SEIU Local 32B contract director. He rose through the ranks, becoming president of the local in 1976. A year later, Local 32B merged with SEIU Local 32J, creating a 70,000-member local with Sweeney as president.

He was elected president of SEIU in 1980 and joined the AFL-CIO Executive Council in 1981. During his time on the council, Sweeney headed the federation's health care and organizing committees.

Trumka, 46, is a third-generation coal miner from southwestern Pennsylvania who began working in the mines at the age of 19. He eventually became an activist in UMWA Local 6290 and a member of the militant Miners for Democracy reform movement.

In the early 1970s, he graduated from Pennsylvania State University and later earned a law degree from Villanova University Law School. After serving four years on the union legal staff, he returned to the mines in 1978. He was elected to the union's executive board in 1981 and became president the next year.

After the UMWA rejoined the AFL-CIO in 1989, Trumka was elected to the Executive Council, where he has headed the Energy Committee and, for the past year, the federation's vital Strategic Approaches Committee.

Chavez-Thompson, 51, has more than 27 years' experience in the labor movement. From the age of 10, she worked summers in the cotton fields of west Texas. She began her career as a union secretary, rising through the ranks of AFSCME, being elected vice president in 1988. She was elected to the AFL-CIO Executive Council in 1993, the first Hispanic woman to hold the post. She is also a longtime officer of the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement.

The executive vice president "shall aid the president in performing the duties of chief executive officer of the federation and shall act on behalf of the president when requested to do so," the constitutional amendment states. "The executive vice president shall administer those departments, functions and responsibilities assigned by the president."

Chavez-Thompson has stated she hopes to use her experience as an organizer in the new post, which is set at the same salary level as the secretary-treasurer.

In his nominating speech, Machinists President George Kourpias praised Sweeney as "a man who by virtue of his vision, his courage and his record is the best candidate to lead us in what promises to be a time of birth and revitalization."

Chavez-Thompson and Laborers President Arthur A. Coia seconded Sweeney's nomination.

Food and Commercial Workers President Douglas H. Dority nominated Donahue, calling him "the premier spokesman of the labor movement. He's displayed that on numerous occasions. He believes it, he understands it and he's willing to fight for it."

AFT Vice President Sandra Feldman and New York State AFL-CIO President Edward J. Cleary seconded Donahue's nomination.

USWA President George F. Becker placed Trumka's name in nomination as a "trade unionist whose energy and whose leadership and whose skill and whose commitment have not only inspired a new generation of American trade unionists but also reminded working families throughout this country what a winning, fighting labor movement is all about." UMWA Vice President Cecil Roberts seconded the nomination.

Easterling's name was placed in nomination by CWA President Morton Bahr. "She has a deep personal understanding about the concerns and hopes of working families, because she was raised at the knees of two active union members, her parents," Bahr said. "She has never forgotten what it means to walk a picket line, to protect contract rights or stand up against sexism, racism and anti-unionism."

Her nomination was seconded by Government Employees President John N. Sturdivant and Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union President Lenore Miller.

After the voice vote amending the constitution to create the office of executive vice president, Chavez-Thompson was nominated by Teamsters President Ron Carey. He called her a "remarkable woman" who "understands how to win and she knows how to involve members. She understands their problems and fears . . . The frontlines of this great labor movement are where the members are and that is where Linda Chavez-Thompson has been and will be."

Electronic Workers Vice President Gloria T. Johnson seconded Chavez-Thompson's nomination.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Convention delegates voted for president and secretary-treasurer on one ballot, and for either a slate of 51 vice presidents or an independent candidate and 50 of the 51 on another ballot.

AFL-CIO CONVENTION

Scab reporters turned away

Two scab reporters from the Detroit Free Press and Detroit News were denied press credentials to cover the convention. The scabs showed up Oct. 23, the first day of the event, at the press room set up by the AFL-CIO Information Department and asked for press credentials that would have allowed them access to the convention floor.

Information Department Director Rex Hardesty denied the credentials, upholding the AFL-CIO policy on anyone doing struck work.

"The issue is the same in Detroit, where our brothers and sisters are picketing, and in New York, where strong unions beat back another union-busting publisher at the Daily News," Hardesty said. "We don't let scabs into our events. They knew it. They disappeared."

The 2,600 employees of the News and Free Press have been on strike since July 13 after negotiations failed to produce an agreement. Management has imported scab reporters and hired union-busting security goons to deliver newspapers.

The AFL-CIO and several affiliated unions have provided staff and financial aid to the strikers, who provided conventioneers with copies of their newspaper and the opportunity to buy a T-shirt to aid striking families.

Nearly 400 members of the commercial and labor press were credentialed for the convention.

A parliamentary Brand

Stanley Brand, appointed by the Executive Council to be the parliamentarian for the 21st constitutional convention, is no stranger to the labor movement.

A prominent Washington attorney and counsel to the House of Representatives for many years, Brand served as parliamentarian to a number of union conventions, including the Teamsters, Government Employees, Carpenters and Bricklayers. He also has provided legal guidance to the AFL-CIO Maritime Trades Department and the Seafarers.

The maritime ties run deep. His father, Herbert Brand, is board chairman of the Transportation Institute, a non-profit research and educational organization that works to promote a strong U.S.-flag merchant marine comprised of American ships crewed by U.S. citizens.

Labor lab 101

The AFL-CIO convention was a laboratory for the study of labor and politics for 20 students from the Empire State College Van Arsdale School of Labor Studies.

The students, who are in a five-year apprenticeship program at IBEW Local 3, are working toward associate degrees. They were assigned to report on the appearance at the convention by President Clinton. "It's critically important that rank-and-file members participate and are made aware of the political process," said Arthur Matthews, labor and politics assistant professor at Empire State College and field representative for the Public Employee Federation, which is affiliated with both the Service Employees and the AFT.

It is equally important that they walk away with the flavor of the organization and how such a large organization works, he explained. The students also will have to prepare a paper on their experiences at the convention.

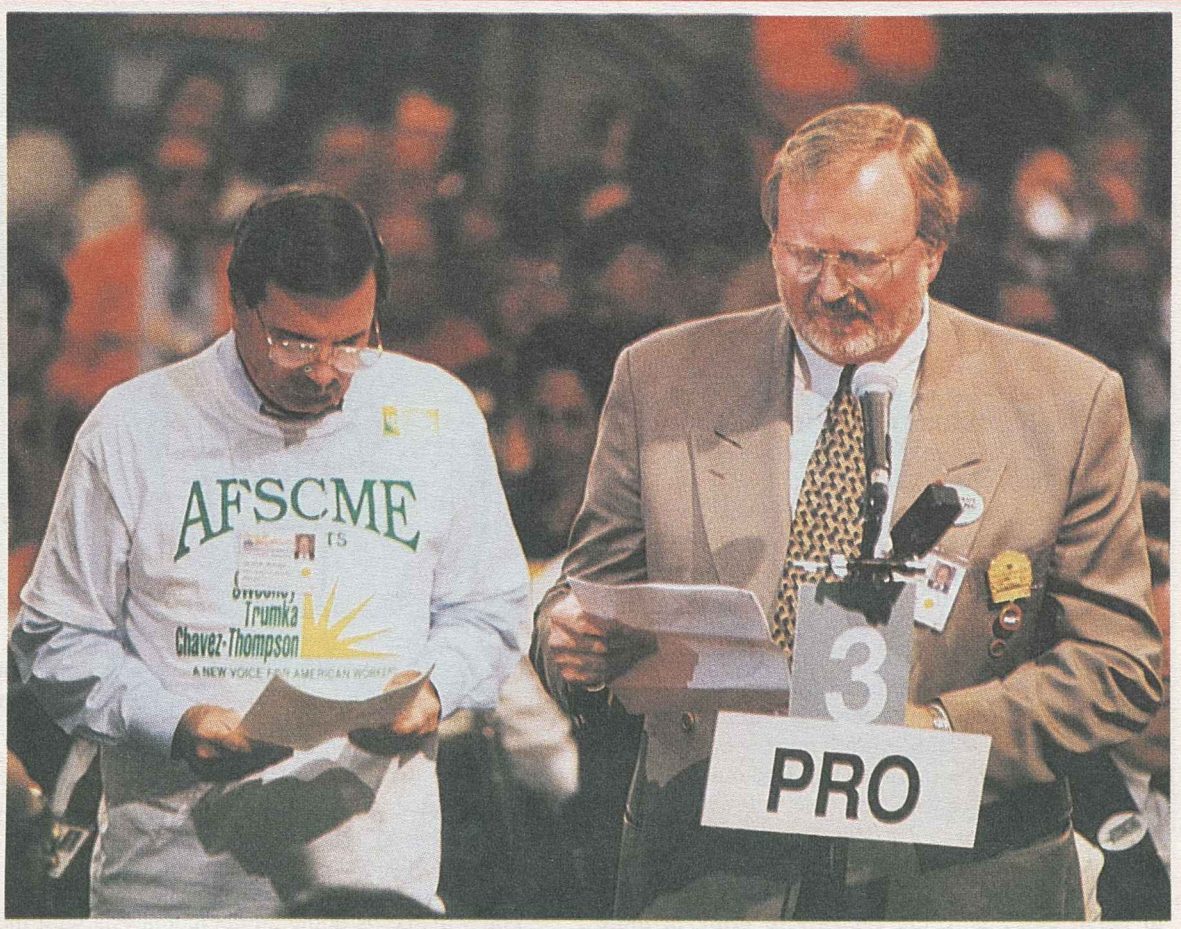
New York loves unionists

The New York State AFL-CIO's Community Service Department was at the ready during the convention to meet the needs of delegates — a fitting display of support from trade unionists in the most unionized state in the nation.

According to census data released during the convention, New York surpassed Hawaii as the most heavily unionized state, primarily because of strong growth among public-sector unions. Union members made up 28.9 percent of the state's work force in 1994.

Delegates were provided an array of services, including a 24-hour employee assistance program for family emergencies, legal problems, health and personal needs, labor history tours, walking and bus sightseeing guides and tours, theater tickets, dining, travel and shopping information and consumer tips.

"We are ready to meet any emergency that might befall any of the delegates," said Edward J. Cleary, president of the state federation, during the convention.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

AFSCME President Gerald W. McEntee and Food and Commercial Workers President Douglas H. Dority, supporters of the Sweeney and Donahue slates, respectively, read the names of 51 vice presidential candidates – a "unity slate" agreed to by both campaigns just prior to the vote.

'Unity slate' accents diversity

Continued from Page 1

to the delegates and to this convention a unity slate?" asked McEntee.

"The theme of Tom Donahue and the rest of his team was changing labor and changing America," McEntee said. "The theme of John Sweeney and his supporters was with a new voice. And so we stand here today to change labor, to change America and to do it with a new voice.

"And I say that, today, we put it together and we call ourselves not change or voice, but we call ourselves the Unity Team from this day on," he said to cheering delegates.

Dority concurred. "We need to leave this hall with one thought in mind, that we've got to go out and protect the workers and fight for the people that need to be organized, and fight for the underprivileged, and fight against a government that has gone completely out of control," he said.

"This is why this labor movement is great: we can agree or disagree, and then we can come back and get together because we all recognize the true enemy is not in this hall," Dority added.

"We have put together a slate that represents in excess of 25 percent minorities and it has wide diversity," he said. "It reaches many industries that weren't reached before. It offers opportunities for people to sit on the Executive Council from major departments in this federation that weren't represented before, and we're very, very pleased with it."

The unity prompted departing AFL-CIO Vice President Jack Sheinkman to say, "We're going to show the employers, we're going to show this Congress that we're going to deliver for working people in America, and all Americans will know."

The council will have the power to create an additional seat between conventions in the event of an unaffiliated union joining the federation — a provision devised by the council in the late 1980s to bring the presidents of the newly reaffiliated Teamsters and Mine Workers onto the council without waiting for a vacancy.

With the election, the Executive Council, now 54 members with the three executive officers, includes 15 women and people of color. That gives the new council 28 percent minority membership vs. 17 percent on the outgoing council (six of 35).

The new council has seven women, nine African-Americans, two Hispanics and one Asian-American.

Prior to approving the amendment, the convention clarified that it does not specifically provide for council voting participation by the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, the A. Philip Randolph Institute, the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, the Coalition of Labor Union Women, Frontlash and the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement. But the new council does include many of the officers of those groups.

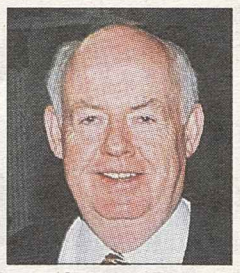


Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

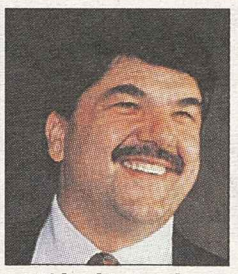
Among the new AFL-CIO vice presidents attending an Executive Council meeting after the convention were, from left, Richard Cordtz, secretary-treasurer of the Service Employees; Carroll Haynes, vice president of the Teamsters; Leon Lynch, vice president of the Steelworkers; and Robert E. Wages, president of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers. The council is expected to meet again in December.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations



John J. Sweeney
President



Richard L. Trumka
Secretary-Treasurer



Linda Chavez-Thompson
Executive Vice President



Capt. J. Randolph Babbitt
Air Line Pilots



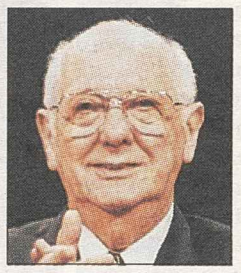
Morton Bahr
Communications Workers



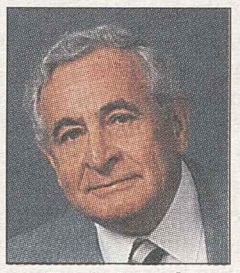
John J. Barry
Electrical Workers



George F. Becker
Steelworkers



Moe Biller
Postal Workers



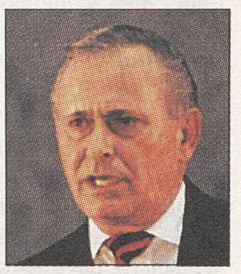
Marvin J. Boede
Plumbers and Pipefitters



Clayola Brown
UNITE!



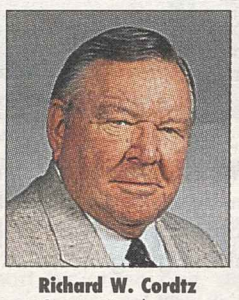
William H. Bywater
Electronic Workers



Ron Carey
Teamsters



Arthur A. Coia
Laborers



Richard W. Cordtz
Service Employees



Douglas H. Dority
Food and Commercial Workers



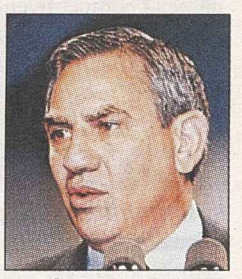
M.A. "Mac" Fleming
Maintenance of Way Employees



Carolyn Forrest
UAW



Pat Friend
Flight Attendants



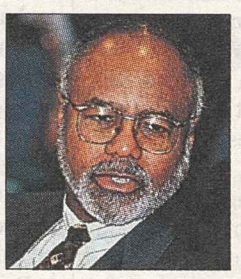
Robert A. Georgine
Building and Construction Trades



Wayne E. Glenn
Paperworkers



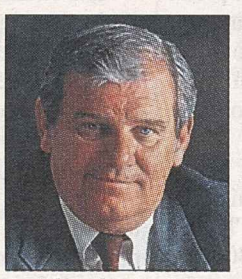
Michael Goodwin
Office and Professional Employees



Joe L. Greene
School Administrators



Sonny Hall
Transport Workers



Edward T. Hanley
Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees



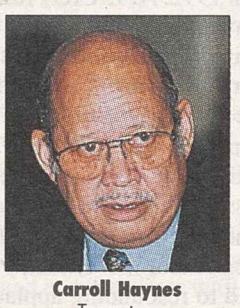
Frank Hanley
Operating Engineers



Sumi Haru
Screen Actors Guild



James E. Hatfield
Glass, Molders and Pottery Workers



Carroll Haynes
Teamsters



Frank Hurt
Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers



Gloria T. Johnson
Electronic Workers



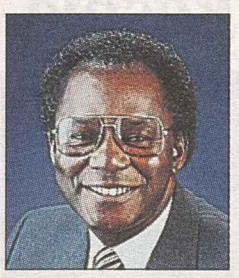
John T. Joyce
Bricklayers



George J. Kourpias
Machinists



James LaSala
Amalgamated Transit Union



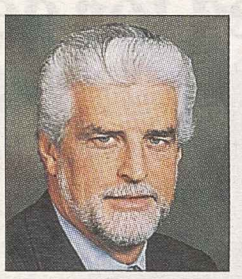
William Lucy
AFSCME



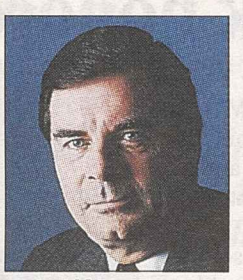
Leon Lynch
Steelworkers



Jay Mazur
UNITE!



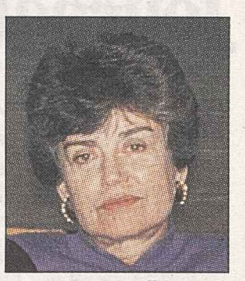
Doug McCarron
Carpenters



Gerald W. McEntee
AFSCME



Andrew McKenzie
Leather Goods, Plastic, Novelty and Service



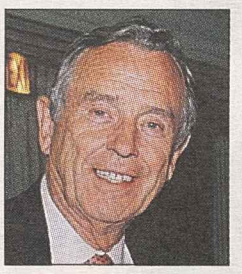
Lenore Miller
Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union



A.L. "Mike" Monroe
Painters



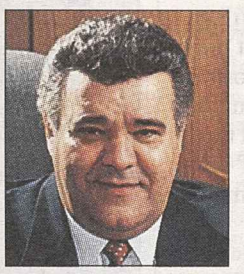
Arthur Moore
Sheet Metal Workers



James J. Norton
Graphic Communications Union



Arturo S. Rodriguez
Farm Workers



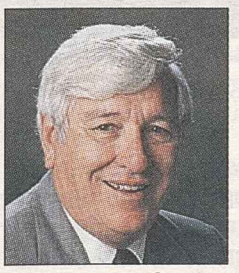
Michael Sacco
Seafarers



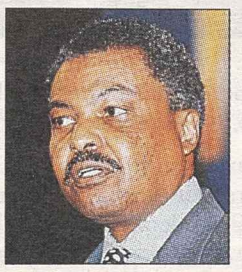
Robert A. Scardelletti
Transportation Communications Union



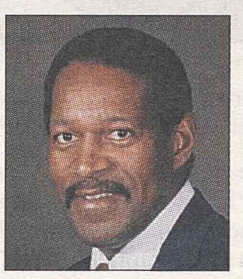
Albert Shanker
AFT



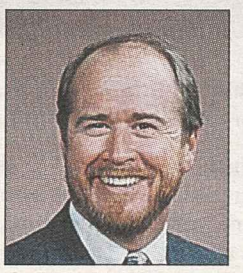
Vincent R. Sombrotto
Letter Carriers



John N. Sturdivant
Government Employees



Gene Upshaw
Professional Athletes



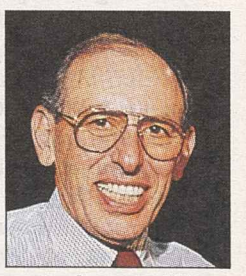
Robert E. Wages
Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers



Jake West
Iron Workers



Alfred K. Whitehead
Fire Fighters



Stephen P. Yokich
UAW

AFL-CIO CONVENTION

Canada faces U.S.-like woes

Canadian unionists are finding themselves under the same kinds of attacks that are facing American families, fraternal delegate Dick Martin of the Canadian Labor Congress told the convention.

Having won a national health care system, a universal pension plan and having outlawed "scab labor," the labor movement in Canada has found itself with what Martin called "our own brands of Newt Gingrich" trying to dismantle social programs in an effort to lower the deficit on the backs of workers.

Members of the Reform and Conservative Parties "are now slashing Canadian regulations on industry and weakening environmental controls, all in the name of debt control, that debt that they incurred," said Martin, secretary-treasurer of the CLC. "They all do it in the name of competitiveness so that Fortune 500 companies can, indeed, raid the world for the rich elite."

Martin warned the delegates to learn from the mistakes that were made with the flawed North American Free Trade Agreement. "We have to organize at home and solidify our base; but we must also build meaningful, tangible solidarity with those brothers and sisters of the developing countries. They are not our enemies, but our friends," he said.

TUC delegate urges fight

Working people have got to solve our own problems in our own workplaces and in our own communities because nobody else is going to do that," Tyrone O'Sullivan of the British Trade Union Congress told cheering delegates at the AFL-CIO convention.

O'Sullivan described how in the past three years, 35 of the last 51 mining pits in the United Kingdom have been closed by the government. But when Tower Colliery, which has been mining coal since 1830, was shut, its 244 workers saved the mine by putting in "$12,000 of our own money. We raised $3 million U.S. dollars equivalent ourselves."

"On Christmas Eve in 1994, we were told, 'The pit is yours.' It's the only worker-owned pit, 100 percent owned by the miners, not only in Britain but in Europe. That's an extraordinary achievement for a group of miners who were down and out," he said.

"There's not much in life that you can do that is better than being a trade unionist," O'Sullivan said. "You spend your livelihood helping the people that you belong to; and remember all these belong to you, and all you belong to them."

Wu: Forced labor costs U.S. jobs

Human rights activist says labor freed him

By Sharolyn A. Rosier
New York

Human rights activist Harry Wu, greeted with a standing ovation by the convention, applauded in return, crediting the U.S. labor movement with securing his freedom so that he could fight another day.

When Wu was jailed in China on trumped-up charges last June, "no other people were more important than those in the American labor movement" in convincing the Beijing tyrants to release him, said Wu. "My friends in the labor movement dropped everything. They worked day and night. They organized and ran international campaigns to free me, from Washington to San Francisco, from Sydney to Paris."

Wu, a U.S. citizen who previously spent 19 years in the Chinese prison system, or laogai, has campaigned tirelessly to expose the forced labor used to produce export goods. Before expelling him, China sentenced Wu to 15 years for "stealing state secrets" — essentially, for gathering information about the laogai and passing them on to "hostile foreign organizations" like CBS, the BBC and the U.S. Congress.

"Forced labor products continue to come into the United States," Wu told the AFL-CIO convention. "The laogai continues to exist, continues to destroy millions of people and create fear in more than a billion more. It keeps an autocratic government alive."

As a chemical worker, a farm worker and then as a coal miner in Chinese forced labor camps, "my back was broken in a coal mine accident," Wu said. "The Chinese government may have broken my back, but they also convinced me that I could not turn my back on the millions of nameless and faceless people suffering today in this laogai."

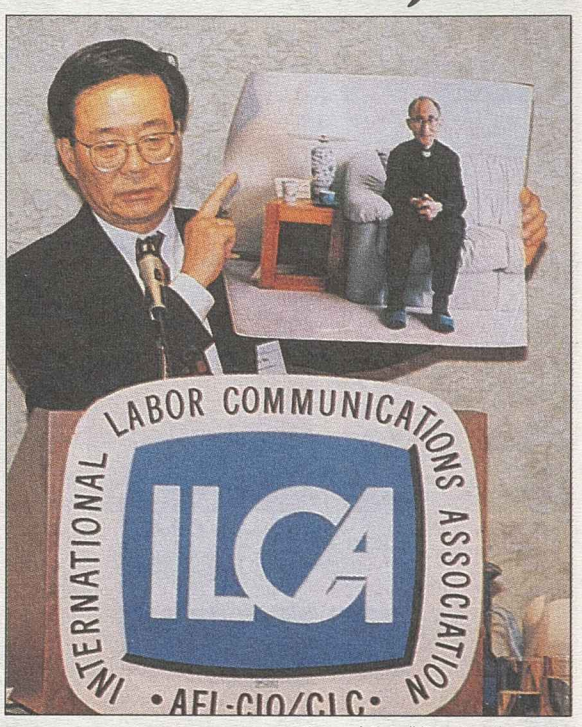
The laogai is the most extensive gulag in the world today. More than 8 million people, many of them political prisoners, are brutalized by the state.

"I took pictures of this fourth labor camp and exposed the ugly truths, but it was too late," Wu told the delegates. "Union members lost their jobs, and I was convicted of stealing state secrets."

No free unions exist in China, and unions in the United States have reason to be concerned, Wu said.

"I know of no American company that protests the recent arrest of Zhou Quo-Jiang, who was thrown into the forced labor camp without a trial after he designed and planned to distribute a T-shirt which had the words 'Workers' Rights and Collective Bargaining' on it," said Wu.

The Machinists' strike at Boeing is really a strike against the Chinese government, said Wu. "It is a strike against the Chinese military, which uses these technologies. It is a strike against all those in America who would lead China to undermine American policy."



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

Harry Wu, addressing the International Labor Communications Association prior to the AFL-CIO convention, talks about a priest who spent nearly three decades in a Chinese gulag.

Like numerous other unions, Wu said, the IAM also has been the victim of the laogai. "The IAM in Buffalo once made a chain hoist. The company then developed an agreement with the Dachang No. 4 prison to make the hoist."

The American company had prisoners making its products for 14 years.

One of the first products of his research on forced labor camps was presented in the AFL-CIO building lobby in 1992. AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue told the convention a lion's share of the credit for labor's unstinting support for Wu is due to Jeffrey Fiedler, secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO Food and Allied Service Trades Department.

During his interrogation, Wu said the police general accused him of being a union spy. "So, all of you are my boss," Wu said with a broad smile.

"If he had accused me of being a friend of the American labor movement, I would have confessed," Wu said to resounding applause.

Journalist Canak honored for democracy fight in Bosnia

New York

Branislav Canak, who received the George Meany Human Rights Award Oct. 25, has risked his life to bring democracy to Serbia and Montenegro and to fight the atrocities committed by the Serbian nationalists.

Formerly a broadcast journalist, Canak has served as president of the United Branch Trade Unions "Independence," or "Nezavisnost," since its founding in November 1991. Nezavisnost is a multiethnic federation, with more than 300,000 members in 13 affiliated unions. Under Canak's leadership, Nezavisnost plays a key role in the anti-war democratic opposition within Serbia. Since 1990, the independent unions have led demonstrations and other activities that target the Milosevic regime and its manipulation of laws, media, universities and the arts, as well as complete control of the official trade unions.

For these efforts, Canak and other labor leaders have been placed on a "shooting list" — fired, harassed and intimidated by the state and gangs.

Following his trip to the United States to attend the 1991 AFL-CIO convention, Canak was fired from his job at the state-run Radio TV Belgrade, then rehired at entry level. He was fired again in January 1993 and threatened with arrest.

In 1992, Canak, his wife and two daughters were under severe personal attack. But he refused offers of help from U.S. trade unionists to leave the country, saying he was too committed to change to leave.

In the winter of 1992-93, inflation in Serbia reached 3 million percent, with prices changing hourly. With millions of workers out of jobs and barely surviving, Nezavisnost raised private contributions for food and medication, which it distributed to the sick, elderly, poor and families with young children in Belgrade.



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney presents the George Meany Human Rights Award to Branislav Canak, president of the independent Bosnian trade union federation, Nezavisnost.

Despite the risks, Canak has remained committed to an end to the warfare, full recognition and territorial integrity of the newly independent nations, the development of a democratic civil society and representation for all workers regardless of ethnicity.

Nezavisnost is recognized as a leading force for democracy in Bosnia and is supported by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, the European Trade Union Confederation and several national confederations, which have refused contact with the government-dominated official unions.

— James B. Parks

Delegates gain new insights in workshops

New York

Many delegates to the AFL-CIO's 21st constitutional convention in New York actually began work before the Oct. 23 opening session, with four workshops held the previous day.

The workshops — on organizing, political action, grass-roots activity and communicating labor's message — accented the federation's campaign to Stand UP for America's Working Families, which was the overall banner for the convention.

Participants in a workshop sponsored by the Organizing Institute's Elected Leader Task Force heard a call to return to labor's traditional roots by having members talk to the unorganized in their own communities.

"We are always telling members 'you are the union,' " said Ann Twomey of AFT, "yet organizing tends to be a staff position. We need to change the idea that organizing is a staff job.

"Members connect with the union when they are asked to make a commitment."

To build that commitment, AFL-CIO Organizing Institute Director Richard Bensinger said, local unions must build internal support for organizing, develop effective staffs, devote money for organizing, mobilize existing members to organize and offer a viable strategy to increase membership.

The renewed emphasis on organizing begins at the top, with new AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney pledging to produce 1,500 new organizers and to create a $20 million organizing fund.

How to motivate union members also was the focus in the workshop on grass-roots legislative action. Susan Washington, the AFL-CIO's associate legislative director, identified five major challenges for getting members to act on the local level:

- Union members don't see a political threat to workers.
- Economic insecurity is a dominant concern.
- Workers generally reject partisanship.
- Members' allegiance to Democrats is weak, largely historical and not based on perceived self-interest.
- Workers don't necessarily look to unions for political guidance.

Workshop participants developed a number of ideas for responding to these challenges, focusing on new ways to educate, activate and communicate with union members.

The workshop on communications featured survey numbers presented by Frank Greer, whose public relations firm has undertaken a two-year study to devise a labor communications strategy. After a summer of advertising, he said, the fact that Republicans are cutting vital programs is beginning to stick.

Robert J. Kalaski, communications director for the Machinists, discussed how unions can sow the seeds in talk radio to counter Rush Limbaugh dittoheads. And JoAnn Mort of UNITE! told how the Los Angeles Thai sweatshops opened the door for her union to help the media explore the abominable conditions in garment shops.

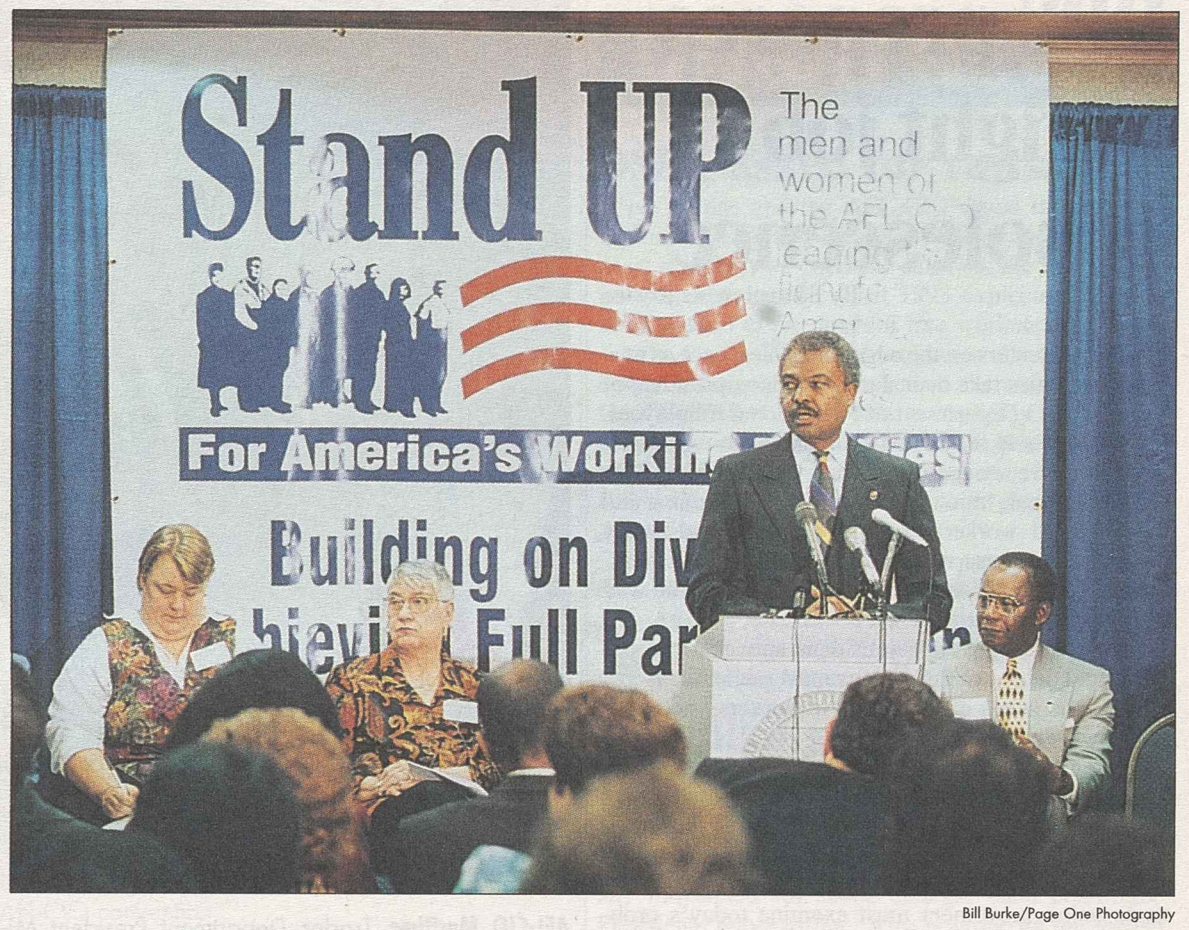
Presenters in the workshop on political action for 1996 urged mobilization at the grass-roots level, with pollster Geoff Garin declaring that the key to getting the rank and file involved is to change the way labor presents its message.

"We need to reinvigorate the grass roots and give the rank and file more control over the process," Garin said. "People don't want unions to work the system, they want the unions to stand up for what's important to them. It's much more about issues and advocacy."

Coordinated campaigns, critical to President Clinton's 1992 victory, will be the Clinton campaign's major vehicle for turning out the vote next year, said Craig T. Smith, a White House political adviser.

"If we lose the White House and Congress, it will take 20 years for Democrats to recover," he said. "There's a lot at stake for working people."

Experts from the National Committee for an Effective Congress and the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee predicted tremendous difficulty for Democrats to regain the Senate, especially because of the record number of retirements by party incumbents in the South, but said prospects were better in the House.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Government Employees President John N. Sturdivant, chair of the AFL-CIO Full Participation Committee, addresses a press conference at the federation's first diversity conference. Among those participating in the conference were, from left, Frontlash Executive Director Cheryl Graeve; Gloria Johnson, president of the Coalition of Labor Union Women; and William Lucy, president of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists.

Unions explore paths to diversity

By Sharolyn A. Rosier
New York

More than 450 trade unionists explored ways to "build on diversity and achieve full participation" at the AFL-CIO's first conference devoted to that issue.

The conference, coordinated by the federation's Civil Rights Department, was organized by the A. Philip Randolph Institute, the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, the Coalition of Labor Union Women, Frontlash and the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement.

"We're fracturing along the lines of race, ethnicity and income," said Service Employees President John J. Sweeney, who later was elected president of the AFL-CIO. "The solution is American workers coming together as never before, because this movement is for everyone, women and men, black and white, Asian Pacific American and Latino, white collar and blue collar and new collar."

"We must build a movement that is broadly reflective of the work force and serves their interests," said AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue. "Some revolutionaries seek to divert attention by blaming immigrant Americans and affirmative action or by glorifying tinhorn racists and anyone who wants to take a potshot at federal employees in the name of 'patriotism' and 'individual liberty.' But we must stay focused on the real issues."

> ***"The solution is American workers coming together as never before, because this movement is for everyone, women and men, black and white, Asian Pacific American and Latino, white collar and blue collar and new collar."***
>
> **— President John J. Sweeney**

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Barbara J. Easterling pointed to herself as an example of the imminent changes in the labor movement. "I am a prime example of what moving towards the 21st century really means."

Heeding the call to come together, APALA President Kent Wong told reporters, "We (support groups) are forging a common agenda to build the U.S. labor movement.

"The agenda will strengthen coalitions between unions and communities of color, organize the unorganized, promote voter registration and voter participation, advance civil rights, defend affirmative action and immigrant rights, and build a better future for all working people."

Wong also denounced the attacks on worker rights, minorities and women by the Republican-dominated Congress, which represents narrow corporate interests and the wealthy elite, contrasted with "those gathered here today (who) represent the interests of working people of all colors united to build multiracial unity and to promote social justice."

"When people of color see the world in many varied shades, when women often feel excluded from local unions that could greatly benefit from their skills, when language differences still seem to divide us, we need to remember that our different views and talents empower us," Government Employees President John N. Sturdivant, told reporters at the press conference.

Sturdivant, who chairs the AFL-CIO Full Participation Committee that was created by President Lane Kirkland after a resolution by the 1993 convention, said, "We need to move past fear, and move into the 21st century."

Also participating in the press conference were CLUW President Gloria T. Johnson; William Lucy, president of CBTU; Cheryl Graeve, executive director of Frontlash; Norman Hill, president of APRI; and Maria Portalatin, secretary-treasurer of LCLAA.

AFSCME Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson, later elected executive vice president of the AFL-CIO, said, "We are the voice of all workers, sisters and brothers."

"But we have to make sure that that voice is loud, that that voice is going to speak in different languages, that that voice is going to look like me, that we are going to have women, and that we are going to have people of color, and that we are going to have people who speak different languages in the front line of the American labor movement, because those are the people today that need our help."

"I can never be black, Hispanic or Asian, but that does not divide me from you," said luncheon speaker Lenore Miller, president of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union and chair of the federation's Civil Rights Committee. "Together, we can accomplish an enormous amount. But we can't get bogged down in power struggles, because then we will be defeated."

During a discussion with the AFL-CIO Full Participation Committee, union members expressed their concerns along with a "wish list" for an "improved, more diverse labor movement."

The conference also included eight workshops on worker rights, affirmative action, organizing, women's concerns, building labor and community alliances, preparing for the 1996 elections, leadership development and immigration.

DPE prepares to fight job obsolescence

By Sharolyn A. Rosier
New York

Every job teeters on the edge of obsolescence as new technologies take over, Jack Golodner, president of the AFL-CIO Department of Professional Employees, told delegates to the DPE 10th biennial convention.

"Unions are needed more than ever before" to fight for educational, training and retraining programs and to safeguard workers from new health and safety dangers coming as a result of these new technologies," he said. "The DPE is on the front line to lead the way in these turbulent times."

Albert Shanker, AFT president and chair of the DPE, told delegates that unions must be innovative to address the needs of today's new workers, including part-time workers.

Noting that "the nature of work is changing," Shanker called for the formation of a national workers' organization to keep the work force informed about national issues and provide a forum for networking, training and exchange of information. "The trade union movement must examine today's problems in a way substantially different than it has ever done in the past."

National Labor Relations Board Chairman William B. Gould IV told some 150 delegates and guests that the NLRB is trying innovations to allow some administrative law judges to administer bench decisions within 72 hours.

"We don't need hundreds of pages of citations," he added. "We need to eliminate wasteful litigation and promote the practice and procedure of collective bargaining."

Delegates also participated in a panel on information technology in education, health care, banking and communications. Communications Workers President Morton Bahr, chair of the panel, stressed the need to make the information superhighway accessible to everyone, not just the affluent.

"This technology has the ability to revolutionize our society," he said. "If used correctly in the health care field alone, we could trim $1 trillion from the nation's health care bill by 2010."

Delegates re-elected Shanker as chairman, Golodner as president and William Lucy, secretary-treasurer of AFSCME, as first vice president.

Delegates also passed 21 resolutions calling for new training, administrative procedures and legislation to enhance safety in public schools; protection of collective bargaining rights of nurses and other professionals; support for international treaties and conventions that ensure performers are protected when their works are broadcast; and creation of programs and criteria to assist students in making the transition from school to work.

Other speakers included Nicholas Beck of the International Federation of Commercial, Clerical, Technical and Professional Employees; Philip Bowyer, general secretary for the Postal, Telephone and Telegraph International; Mary Kay Henry, director of the Service Employees' Health Care Division; Martha Matzke, director of special projects at AFT; Kim Roberts, assistant national director of news/broadcast for the Television and Radio Artists; and Charley Richardson of the University of Massachusetts.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

AFL-CIO Maritime Trades Department President Michael Sacco draws a laugh from New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, who discussed the city's efforts to stabilize and rebuild its port.

Unions seek to save U. S. maritime

New York

Delegates to the AFL-CIO Maritime Trades Department convention sent out an S.O.S. for help in saving an industry being battered on the rocks.

"Revitalizing the maritime industry is essential to fortifying our national security, creating jobs and revitalizing our economy," Transportation Secretary Federico Peña told the delegates.

The Jones Act, which restricts domestic cargo movements to U.S.-flag vessels, is an absolute necessity, he added. "If Germany, Canada, France and 35 other trading partners have this legislation, why shouldn't we? Why should we put our workers at a competitive disadvantage?"

> *"Revitalizing our maritime industry is essential to fortifying our national security, creating jobs and revitalizing our economy."*
>
> **—Transportation Secretary Federico Peña**

Labor is fighting an effort in Congress to repeal the Jones Act.

"The city's failure to manage the port has cost us jobs and growth," said New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani. "So we're trying to stabilize growth and rebuild it."

Pointing to the Red Hook Marine Terminal, Giuliani said the number of containers unloaded decreased by 25,000 in 1994. But the city moved more cranes to the terminal this year, and "the terminal is now handling two times as much as it did in 1994."

Unfortunately at the federal level, "the talk is not about revitalization or reform of this industry," said Rep. Herbert H. Bateman (R-Va.) "We are talking survival. Let us cast aside differences between labor, the carriers and the shipyards that have sometimes characterized previous debates, and unite behind the goal of reassuring that the United States of America remains a maritime power."

Reps. Neal Abercrombie (D-Hawaii) and Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.) pointed to the importance of labor in fighting Gingrich's "Contract with America," a theme that echoed through the speeches of both candidates for the AFL-CIO presidency.

"My idea of a just society is one in which honest labor raises the standard of living for all, rather than enormous wealth for just a few," said John J. Sweeney, who was later elected by the AFL-CIO convention. "My vision of a perfect labor movement is one which constantly examines and corrects its own imperfections."

Tom Donahue outlined his platform and concluded with a call for unity throughout labor's ranks in order to battle the forces of recidivism in Congress and of organized greed in business.

Delegates re-elected by acclamation Michael Sacco, president; Frank Pecquex, secretary-treasurer; and William Zenga, vice president.

Other speakers included Craig T. Smith, deputy assistant to President Clinton; Adm. William Earner, deputy chief of Naval Operations; George J. Kourpias, president of the Machinists; James J. Norton, president of the Graphic Communications Union; Wayne E. Glenn, president of the Paperworkers; and Al Herberger, maritime administrator.

— Sharolyn A. Rosier

ILCA explores new ways to communicate labor's message

New York

Celebrating 40 years, delegates to the International Labor Communications Association convention explored ways to achieve its theme, "Taking Back Our Message."

Labor's hurdle for the 1996 elections is to convince people they have a stake in the elections, said Guy Molyneux of Peter D. Hart Research Associates.

According to information gathered in eight focus groups with union members, Molyneux said, "Members appear to be largely disconnected from their unions' political action efforts, suggesting that a new, stronger relationship will have to be forged if trade unions are to be politically educated and mobilized."

"The movement needs to educate members about basic economic and political facts and relationships," Molyneux said, reflecting the fact that many members say, "just give me the candidates' records and let me decide."

Delegates elected a new president, James Earp, who is managing editor of Engineering News for Operating Engineers Local 3. Former ILCA President Leo Canty did not seek re-election. Susan L. Philips, editor of UFCW Action, was re-elected secretary-treasurer.

Newly elected vice presidents include Dorothy Benz, editor of UNITE Local 23-25 News; Stephen Chapman, managing editor of Flightlog; Deborah Davis, communications coordinator for Union Privilege; Mary Ann Forbes, director of publications for the African American Labor Center, AFL-CIO; Faye Hale, editor of The Laborer; Mike Leedom, editor of The 807 Solidarity News; John Lavin, editor of The Dialogue; and Charles Robideau, managing editor of Steelabor.

The 17th A.J. Liebling Memorial Lecture was delivered by John M. Barry, retired managing editor of the AFL-CIO News, who said labor communicators must continue to be an "instrument of change in the labor movement. The labor press has come a long way," he said. "Publications are easier to read, look better and address more issues."

One of these issues is forced labor, which human rights activist Harry Wu told the delegates is an effort by the Chinese government to "brainwash people and change their morality."

Pointing to a picture of a textile labor camp, Wu said, "The camp earned some $85 million from prison labor. Most of the profit from prison labor goes to the government."

Delegates also participated in a panel discussion on "Looking Back — 40 Years of Progress," with Barry, Irwin Klass, former Chicago Federation of Labor editor and ILPA vice president, and Dick Howard, former ILPA president and editor-manager of the Signalman's Journal. The panel was moderated by Carolyn Jacobson, public relations director of the Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers.

— Sharolyn A. Rosier



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

Communications Workers President Morton Bahr and Newspaper Guild President Linda K. Foley sealed the unions' merger in a ceremony during a break in the AFL-CIO convention.

NEWSMAKERS

Bob Welsh, 48, has been named executive assistant to newly elected AFL-CIO President **John J. Sweeney**, who also named **Jon Hiatt**, 46, to be the federation's general counsel. **Denise Mitchell** was named special assistant to the president for public affairs. **Gerald M. Shea**, 48, who served as executive assistant to former President **Tom Donahue**, was appointed special assistant to Sweeney and assigned to facilitate the transition of new officers. Sweeney also announced that **Laurence Gold**, 58, former AFL-CIO general counsel, will remain as a counsel for the federation to deal with ongoing legal affairs.

Welsh, Hiatt and Mitchell all served in the same positions at the Service Employees. Shea began his career with SEIU before becoming AFL-CIO Employee Benefits director in 1993.

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer **Richard L. Trumka** named **Brad Burton,** 43, as his executive assistant. Burton previously served in the same position with Trumka at the Mine Workers.

Linda Chavez-Thompson, executive vice president for the AFL-CIO, has named **Arlene Holt,** 44, as her executive assistant. Holt was the California area director for AFSCME.

John T. Joyce, president of the Bricklayers, was re-elected to the board of directors at the Center for National Policy, which focuses on developing better understanding about major issues confronting the nation.

John J. Krieger has been named to replace **Thomas F. Kennedy**, who retired as network coordinator of the Communications Workers' Broadcast Employees and Technicians division.

DEATH

Genora Johnson Dollinger, organizer of the UAW's Women's Brigade during the famous General Motors sit-down strike at Flint, Mich., in 1936-37, died in California. She was 82.

Dollinger was 23 when she organized the brigade to feed and support UAW strikers, who started their sit-in at GM's Fisher Body plant on Christmas Day, 1936. The strike ended 44 days later after the "Battle of the Overpass," when GM recognized the UAW. Dollinger and four other brigade members blocked the Fisher Body plant, putting themselves between the workers and GM's officials.

After being blacklisted in Flint, she moved to Detroit and became a leader in a UAW unit. She was inducted into the Hall of Fame of the Michigan Women's Historical Center in Lansing last year.

Survivors include her husband, Sol Dollinger, son Ronald and two grandchildren.

— Compiled by Muriel H. Cooper

RESOURCES

By Hammer and Hand All Arts Do Stand is a new art exhibit at the George Meany Center Memorial Archives that documents the banners and murals of Mike Alewitz. The exhibit will run through Nov. 27 at the center, 10000 New Hampshire Ave., Silver Spring, Md. An artist's reception will be held Nov. 12 from 6-8 p.m.

PUBLICATIONS

Working but Poor in America and **Housing and the American Dream: Unions Have a Role and So Does Government** (issue papers 84 and 85) are available from the AFL-CIO Reproductions and Mailings Division, 815 16th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006; 202/637-5041.

Union Tactics Matter: The Impact of Union Tactics on Certification Elections, First Contracts and Membership Rates, by Kate Bronfenbrenner and Tom Juravich, is a 25-page paper that contrasts the public sector, where employer opposition to organizing is not universal, with the private sector, where virulent and illegal employer tactics face few and ineffectual sanctions. For copies, call Linda Townsend or Milly McGucken at 301/431-6400.

UNION NEWS

OSHA asked for revision

Five unions and the AFL-CIO urged the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to revise basic standards on chemical safety in the wake of the investigation into an April 1995 explosion in Lodi, N.J., that led to the death of five workers.

"The Process Safety Management standard fails to comprehensively cover reactive chemicals, and the HAZWOPER standard fails to explicitly require employers facing emergency conditions to directly contact local fire or other appropriate emergency authorities," noted a letter sent by the group to OSHA Administrator Joseph A. Dear.

The Oct. 23 letter, signed by representatives of the AFL-CIO, UNITE!, the Steelworkers, Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers, Fire Fighters and Chemical Workers, urged Dear to immediately reopen the standards to close the loopholes.

Organizing on JLC scope

Labor's renewed commitment to organizing was much in evidence at the Jewish Labor Committee's biennial convention in New York Sept. 9-10.

"Organizing is the lifeblood of any organization and any movement for social change," said committee President Lenore Miller. "This is a time for the Jewish Labor Committee to roll up its sleeves and see how we can be most effective in working with our allies in the trade union movement and in the Jewish community as we organize for the future."

Miller, who is president of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union and an AFL-CIO vice president, presented delegates with an agenda emphasizing developing and strengthening strategic alliances with civil rights and social-justice agencies.

"Most important, we will work with American unions in their efforts to organize workers and defend the fundamental right to safe and decent working conditions in this country and around the world," she said.

The convention adopted resolutions castigating Congress and employers for "conducting a vicious onslaught against workers and their unions," supporting the current peace process in the Middle East and expressing concern for present dangers facing civil rights and civil liberties.

'Reform' repeal sought

Charleston, W. Va.

Political endorsements and the state's workers' compensation law topped the agenda for nearly 400 delegates and guests of the West Virginia AFL-CIO convention Oct. 4-6.

Labor is working on repeal of a workers' comp "reform" measure enacted by the state legislature in this year's session. Television and radio ads produced by the state federation, along with a documentary, were shown to delegates for their review, along with other aspects of the public relations campaign on the issue.

In other action, former state Sen. Charlotte Pritt received the convention's endorsement for governor. While serving in the state legislature, Pritt compiled a 100 percent COPE voting record. Receiving endorsements for re-election were Sen. John D. Rockefeller (D) and Democratic U.S. Reps. Nick Joe Rahall, Allan Mollohan and Bob Wise.

Speakers included Vice President Cecil Roberts of the Mine Workers, COPE Director Richard Walsh, AFL-CIO Regional Director Kevin Kistler, AFL-CIO COPE Regional director Pauline Huffman and the West Virginia labor commissioner.

Importance of the union label found in quality, jobs

New York

A worker locked out at A.E. Staley in Decatur, Ill., was among speakers reiterating the importance of the union label at the 65th Union Label and Service Trades Department convention.

AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue told the 100 delegates, meeting in advance of the AFL-CIO convention, that the 72 Thai workers imprisoned in sweatshop conditions in Los Angeles point to the importance of the department's work.

"The goods are bought by American companies like Wal-Mart and Macy's, which don't bother to ask how or where the goods are produced. The public needs to know union-made products now more than ever before," he said.

"Union-made is the ultimate made in the United States," Union Label Department President James E. Hatfield said. "But we must remind people what it's all about. It must become a mission."

Fortunately, rank-and-file union members are delivering the message throughout New York, said state AFL-CIO President Edward J. Cleary. "It enhances us and keeps us strong."

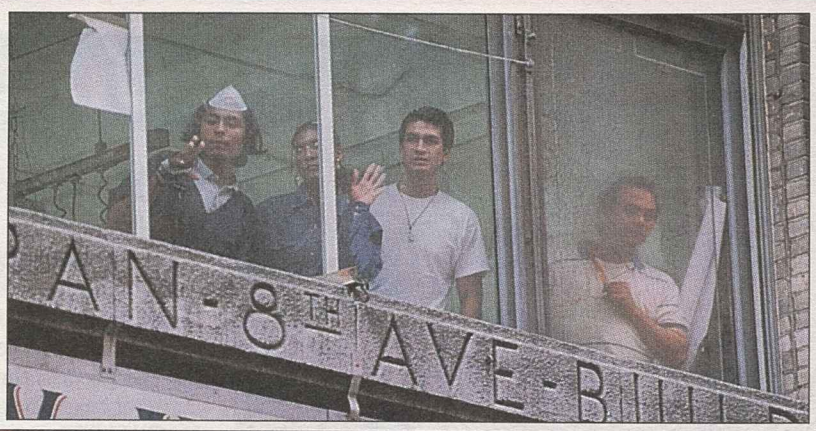
The increase in prison labor sweatshops has hurt the union label, said Charles Mercer, the department's secretary-treasurer. "China's government requires companies to buy at least half the goods used to produce a product in China. So we can't wait on politicians to change laws. We must just buy American."

The delegates also received updates on strikes at Bridgestone/ Firestone and the Detroit News and Free Press, as well as the lockout at Staley. Mike Griffin, a "Road Warrior" from Decatur, told the delegates "we need to take a worldwide strike to make the wheels stop turning and march right into the House and Senate. If employers are multinational, then workers need to be too."

Steelworkers Vice President Kenneth Coss also stated that the strike at Bridgestone/Firestone must be taken to the Japanese backyard because "they are more concerned about their own jobs and economy."

Delegates re-elected Hatfield president and Mercer secretary-treasurer. Douglas Baynes of the Carpenters was elected vice president.

— Sharolyn A. Rosier



The new AFL-CIO leaders join UNITE! President Jay Mazur and his members, as well as Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich, speaking below, at a rally outside an 8th Avenue sweatshop, as curious garment workers look on from their shop windows, at right.

Photos by Bill Burke/Page One Photography



Unions rally in garment district

Reich: Administration will shut sweatshops

By Muriel H. Cooper
New York

As Rosa Guaman spoke in anguished tones, she pointed upward toward an old brick building on 8th Avenue in Manhattan, where blackened windows hid years of exploitation and pain.

"I worked on the 12th floor in a sweatshop and my employer would not pay me," she said.

Guaman is one of thousands of workers in America who are exploited because they can't speak English, or because they are a minority, or because they are women, or underage or just plain scared to describe the conditions on their jobs.

"We are asking for justice and equality for all workers," she said to the cheers of hundreds of UNITE! workers and delegates from the AFL-CIO convention, who rallied Oct. 26 to support workers in New York City's garment district.

"We are seeing an old system returning with new labels," said Jay Mazur, president of UNITE! "If corporations had their way, all of us would work in sweatshops.

"We have been there and we are not going back!" he declared.

In recent months, the U.S. government uncovered a California sweatshop in which 72 Thai workers were held in prison-like conditions, forced to work long hours without overtime pay.

"I promise you that this administration will shut down sweatshops," said Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich as the diverse crowd waved signs that read, in several languages, "No More Sweatshops" and "Homework From Teachers, Not From Bosses."

"When we found out the slave-like conditions in which workers were manufacturing goods in California, we traced the goods and manufacturers and said, we can't tolerate this," Reich said. "We have no room for companies that treat workers like animals."

He said a list would be released on the day after Thanksgiving —the busiest shopping day of the year — denoting "the good guys — those manufacturers and retailers who have done the right thing."

The union must stand up to unscrupulous corporations on a mission of destruction, said AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney. "They are chopping job security, health care and rights of the American families."

"Workers around the country must do one thing," Reich said, "and that's unite."

SEIU seals national Grancare pact

The Service Employees won an extraordinary national agreement with Grancare Inc. nursing homes that will give workers a voice in patient care, pensions and the right to organize.

The agreement with the Atlanta-based company will cover 2,000 workers at 16 homes under contract with the union in Michigan, Wisconsin and California. Four additional homes will become part of regional contracts upon completion of negotiations.

"The agreement we negotiated could potentially have national implications on SEIU's collective bargaining and organizing efforts at other large nursing home chains where we are fighting for fair wages, adequate staffing levels and safety for nursing home workers," said Dave Snapp, SEIU's nursing home campaign director.

"This is an unprecedented victory for health care consumers nationwide," said Snapp. "We have been working, and will continue to work, to achieve dignity, rights and respect for patients as well as workers in homes across the nation."

The agreement calls for regional master contracts for all outstanding contracts in Michigan, Wisconsin and Northern California, all to expire May 1, 1998. Patient care committees, comprising labor and management, will work on each regional agreement, including the use of paid patient care representatives for at least one facility in each contract.

"A union member will be paid to work on the labor-management committees," said Snapp. "This is a major investment by the company in making this scheme work."

The company agreed to enter into and maintain the SEIU National Industry Pension Fund for all SEIU bargaining units now in negotiations. Grancare further agreed that when contracts become open for other SEIU-represented facilities, the SEIU National Industry Pension fund would be offered and implemented at those facilities on the same terms.

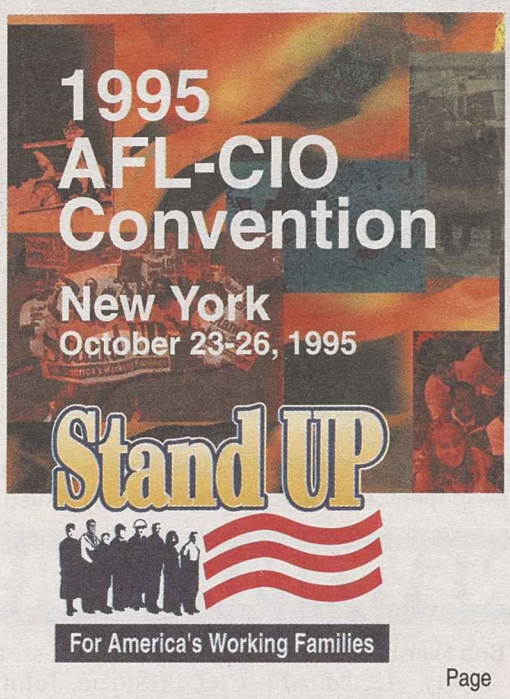
"I believe this is the first time on a national basis that a nursing home company has agreed to a Taft-Hartley defined pension program," said Snapp.

In addition, 12 Grancare facilities now will have organizing rights in secret ballot elections that do not have to go to the National Labor Relations Board, Snapp said.

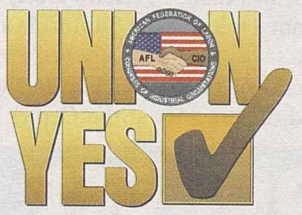
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AFL-CIO NEWS

VOLUME 40, NUMBER 24 NOVEMBER 20, 1995



Union corporate campaigns rallying international and community support are under fire in Congress and the courts. **See FOCUS, Page 5.**



Jim Levitt/Impact Visuals

AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney, Secretary-Treasurer Richard L. Trumka and Executive Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson join Machinists President George J. Kourpias and Boeing strikers. **See story, Page 7.**

Checkmate: Workers held in cruel game

Republican-led Congress held liable by public

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

The federal work force, described by AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney as "pawns in a cruel budget game," went home as much of the U.S. government shut down Nov. 14 with vows to turn up the heat on the Congress that Americans clearly blamed for the standoff.

Because the government was out of money — and did not receive authority from the president and Congress for further spending by midnight Nov. 13 — agencies were forced to close.

"We condemn Republican congressional leaders for using federal workers as pawns in a cruel budget game designed to circumvent the wishes of the American people," Sweeney said. "The AFL-CIO will support the locked-out workers with every resource at our command, and we will resist this attempt at budget blackmail with every weapon at our disposal."

"This Congress has callously neglected the needs of all Americans," Government Employees President John N. Sturdivant told reporters at a news briefing the day of the shutdown. "Congress doesn't care if your grandmother's Social Security check is lost or stolen. They've just closed the nation's 1,300 Social Security offices and shut off the agency's '800' help line."

Budget Director Alice Rivlin told all federal employees to report to work as usual on the 14th, but about 800,000 "non-essential" workers, approximately 40 percent of the federal work force, were sent home shortly thereafter. At the Labor Department, that meant about 12,750 employees were sent out the door at mid-morning.

The District of Columbia, which depends on U.S. funds, was forced to furlough 13,000 workers. Also affected were janitors represented by Service Employees Local 82. AFSCME President Gerald W. McEntee, whose union represents about 6,000 federal employees, blasted the Republicans for their "cavalier, irresponsible attitude."

Sturdivant asked AFGE members to go directly from their shuttered offices to the offices of their members of Congress, firmly asking them to pass an acceptable temporary spending bill. After all, members of Congress still are receiving their paychecks for failing to complete their work, he told reporters.

"I have a great deal of concern that the public is

Continued on Page 3

Labor helps turn political tide

By Michael Byrne

Organized labor sent a message to the right-wing forces in control on Capitol Hill, helping Democrats oust Newt Gingrich-inspired Republican candidates across the nation on Election Day.

Union activists turned out workers to vote in key contests in rainy Kentucky, Mississippi and Virginia, beat back an anti-gay discriminatory referendum in Maine, where Democrats seized control of the legislature, and generally punished those running on the House Speaker's "Contract with America."

The first chance that voters got to cast ballots on the GOP legislative program, "they said 'no' to the mean-spirited cuts in Medicare, Medicaid, education, worker protections and social programs now before Congress and the president," said AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney. "Bigotry was beaten in Maine. Destruction of public education was defeated in Virginia. And thanks to an eleventh-hour labor blitz led personally by AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Rich Trumka, voters turned out in Kentucky and the Democratic candidate for governor won by a 51-49 margin," Sweeney said.

Trumka appeared with COPE-endorsed Paul Patton (D) on the weekend before the vote, helping to mobilize a labor turnout that many political analysts said helped push Patton past Republican Larry Forgy. Even Forgy, in a call to the Louisville Courier-Journal, conceded that labor had made the difference, not only in heavily unionized counties but in helping to turn out the African-American vote through the A. Philip Randolph Institute.

State, local AFL-CIOs seen holding key to '96

See story, Page 12

Seven national AFL-CIO staffers were assigned to the Kentucky race, and COPE also directed the work of nine activists released for the campaign by the Steelworkers, Teamsters, Operating Engineers, Musicians, Food and Commercial Workers and the Communications Workers. Two members of the Electrical Workers and CWA also were working with the APRI.

COPE sent out more than 158,000 pieces of mail

Continued on Page 9

AFL-CIO 'pumps up' solidarity campaigns to help strikers

By James B. Parks

The struggles for justice at A.E. Staley and the Detroit newspapers were strengthened as the AFL-CIO prepared to pump more resources into the campaigns of solidarity with striking workers, fulfilling a resolution from the October convention.

Dan Lane, a 19-year Staley veteran, decided to end his 64-day hunger strike after AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney told him the strike "is at the top of our priority list."

During Lane's bedside news conference Nov. 4, Sweeney, on the speaker phone, told Lane his courage has been an inspiration to the federation's top leaders and "your strength gives us strength. As we escalate and put additional pressure on PepsiCo and Tate and Lyle, we need you strong and vital to assist in our efforts."

The Detroit newspaper strikers were on top of the news with the publication Nov. 19 of the first edition of the Detroit Sunday Journal, an alternative to the scab newspapers that had an initial press run of 300,000 in 48 pages and included ads from companies that had abandoned the Detroit News and the Detroit Free Press.

The Journal was financed by the international unions representing the strikers, who for the first time in four months could put pressure on the scab papers by doing the work they had withheld from the News and Free Press.

Sweeney appointed a task force to develop and coordinate the federation's efforts in both the lockout at Staley, a Decatur, Ill., firm owned by the London-based Tate and Lyle, and the strike at the News and the Free Press, owned by two of the nation's largest publishers, Gannett and Knight-Ridder.

Continued on Page 8

Workers gain Radisson pact, end 8-year battle

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

Ending a frustrating eight-year struggle, workers at the Radisson Plaza VII Hotel in Minneapolis ratified their first contract by an 11-1 margin.

"It was certainly a long, difficult road. Nobody is going to deny that," said Dan Kuschke, secretary-treasurer of Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Local 17, which along with Teamsters Local 638 represents 160 workers at the hotel. "We're very eager to now focus on the future of this hotel."

The three-year contract includes full health coverage for all employees who work more than 20 hours per week. Other contract provisions include time-and-a-half for hours worked in excess of eight, overtime pay for the sixth day of work, seniority, six paid sick days and eight paid holidays.

There is no uniform wage increase, but many job classifications will be paid above union scale, making the workers' wages among the highest in the Twin Cities hotel industry, the unions said. The increases, ranging from 4 percent to 4.5 percent, will be based on position, performance and length of service.

Because of the settlement, the National Labor Relations Board agreed to withdraw a complaint pending in federal court that alleges the Radisson violated a court order to bargain in good faith with the unions.

Dean Riesen, president of Carlson Real Estate Co., owner of the hotel, said the NLRB complaint was one of the factors that figured in the hotel's decision to step up efforts to resolve the longstanding dispute.

Curt Carlson purchased the hotel in 1981 with a promise that he would rehire the employees and recognize the unions after hotel renovations.

With the unions' support, Carlson sought funding for the convention hotel from the city, which authorized some $24 million in public funding for the $180 million project.

After receiving the money, Carlson developed more office space and fewer hotel rooms than he had promised. When interest rates fell in 1988, the hotel needed refinancing again.

Carlson got the financing and again promised to make the Radisson a union property. The workers voted for union representation in 1988.

Over the years, the unions filed lawsuits in federal court and staged periodic protests, including a demonstration outside Carlson's house. The unions also steered away convention business.

They successfully emptied the hotel over the Fourth of July weekend by lobbying a contingent of the unaffiliated National Education Association.

ORGANIZING

Union Privilege spurs win

Impressed with the benefits offered through the AFL-CIO Union Privilege programs and threatened with the loss of jobs, almost 600 federal workers at two offices have voted for union representation.

Nearly 80 percent of the 525 workers at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers office in New York City voted in the Professional and Technical Engineers. In Seal Beach, Calif., nearly two-thirds of the professional employees at the Naval Weapons Station voted for representation.

"The workers like the MasterCard and mortgage programs offered through Union Privilege," said Bill Schofield, a representative for IFPTE. "Plus, with government cutbacks, the workers don't have anyone to fight for them. They have nowhere to turn to except the union," he said.

Starring with the union

Equity members in the Washington-Baltimore market have joined forces with the local branch of the Screen Actors Guild and Television and Radio Artists to launch a drive to educate members of all three unions to honor their union affiliation and reject nonunion work.

The "Friends Don't Let Friends Work Nonunion" campaign reinforces the message that affiliation with even one of the three major performing unions means they are obligated not to accept nonunion work of any kind. The campaign has developed two posters for display on the Equity Callboards of every union house in the market and local casting agencies.

For more information, contact Jane Beard, P.O. Box 11052, Takoma Park, Md., 20913.

Overnite worker regains job

Overnite Transport employee Hugo Hernandez has returned to his job with full back pay after being fired illegally for leading the workers' fight for a contract in the Miami facility.

Teamsters President Ron Carey called the decision to rehire Hernandez "a tremendous victory for Overnite workers in Miami and throughout the country. Overnite workers have shown company executives what to expect if they continue violating workers' rights."

The nationwide IBT organizing drive thus far has enlisted 1,600 workers at 13 terminals.



Photo by Rick Rocamura

Hillhaven nursing home workers turn out to welcome the arrival of the Dignity Train in Oakland, Calif.

Union blasts nursing home's tactics

By Muriel H. Cooper

The Service Employees have protested the selective lockout and "permanent replacement" of union nursing home workers who led a one-day strike at five Hillhaven Corp. nursing homes.

Nearly 500 workers from the Northern California sites participated in the strike Nov. 13 to support decent patient care and dignity for health care providers.

At least 10 of the striking workers were notified by telephone that they were "permanently replaced," and as many as 50 additional workers were locked out.

"Not only is the company's replacement of workers blatantly illegal, it demonstrates Hillhaven's lack of concern for patients in its facilities," said Sal Rosselli, president of SEIU Local 250.

It is that kind of inhumane corporate gesture, coupled with congressional Republicans trying to eliminate federal nursing home regulations and benefits for the poor and sick, "that leaves unionized nursing homes as the last line of defense in patient care," Rosselli said.

"The elimination of these regulations will allow national for-profit corporations like Hillhaven to make every decision based on profits as opposed to providing adequate patient care. Hillhaven knows this — that is why Hillhaven will invest all health care dollars necessary to eliminate the union's watchdog role in their business," he said.

The workers, accompanied by Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, boarded a "Dignity Train" from Sacramento to Oakland, where another rally, march and picket line were held.

The event kicked off a series of events to focus attention on Hillhaven, where almost half of the workers have been without a contract since January. Since September, workers have protested three times over inadequate training, equipment and staffing levels.

In September, Hillhaven was acquired by the Vencor hospital chain, creating the third-largest health care employer in the nation. "The advent of Vencor leaves Hillhaven standing alone as the major nursing home provider that continues to attack worker and patient rights," Rosselli said.

Since SEIU began the "Dignity, Rights and Respect" campaign, the union reached a national agreement in October with Grancare, Inc., and in early November a statewide agreement in Connecticut with Sun Healthcare Corp. The Sun settlement calls for substantial wage increases and pensions for 1,250 workers at nine homes.

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Editor: Michael Byrne

Assistant Editors: David Kameras, Colleen M. O'Neill, James B. Parks

Staff Writers: Muriel H. Cooper, Mike Hall, Sharolyn A. Rosier

Graphics/Layout: Stan Hitt, Hindi M. Fracasse

AFL-CIO Press Secretary: Candice Johnson

AFL-CIO Headquarters: 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006
Telephone: (202) 637-5010 • CompuServe: 71112,53 • Internet: http://www.aflcio.org

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE AFL-CIO, LEADING THE FIGHT FOR AMERICA'S WORKING FAMILIES

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Unions provide loans, benefits in U.S. lockout

Continued from Page 1

really not aware of the real-life implications of shutting down an agency," said Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich. "Workplace safety inspections, wage-and-hour investigations and pension fund monitoring will come to a halt."

"What are my federal tax dollars paying for, since federal employees have been locked out and Americans are not being served?" said Larry Drake, an AFGE member who works at the Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics.

That's the question millions of Americans asked as federal museums and passport offices closed and phones rang off the hook at the Internal Revenue Service, the Social Security Administration and other federal government agencies.

The shutdown came after President Clinton vetoed legislation to raise the debt limit, as well as temporary spending legislation that included a provision to raise Medicare premiums paid by senior citizen beneficiaries. The Republicans' legislation on the debt limit also was temporary; it would have extended government borrowing authority through Dec. 12.

The debt limit extension was unacceptable, Clinton said, because it would have tied the hands of the treasury secretary to juggle accounts and prevent government default, and it included unrelated regulatory provisions on health and the environment.

A temporary spending measure is needed because Congress failed to pass all 13 annual spending bills by Oct. 1, the start of the fiscal year. Clinton signed the third bill Nov. 13, providing $19.3 billion for the Energy Department, parts of the Interior and Defense departments, the Army Corps of Engineers and other smaller agencies.

He already had signed bills funding the Agriculture Department and military construction.

Since 1981, there have been nine federal funding lapses, including four in which federal workers were furloughed. The most recent shutdown occurred on Columbus Day weekend in 1990.

According to the General Accounting Office, that 1990 weekend shutdown — which cost an estimated $3.4 million — "had significant adverse effects and did not convey to the public an image of a well-managed government."

AFGE projects that a shutdown would result in a weekly loss of $1.04 billion in federal workers' pay.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

AFGE President John Sturdivant and Kitty Peddicord, director of the union's Women's/Fair Practices Department, outline some of the options available to locked-out union members.

Unions planned for shutdown

In anticipation of such action by the Republican-controlled Congress, the AFL-CIO began working with a Washington bank to create a $5 million fund in September to provide federal workers with low- or no-interest loans. The AFL-CIO will provide $1 million in interest-free loans, to be matched by the bank, under a program to assist locked-out and striking workers whose funds have been depleted.

That program was approved by the Executive Council in August.

AFGE also filed a lawsuit against the federal government in D.C. Superior Court. The lawsuit seeks:

- A declaratory order from the court for the government to pay essential employees who are required to work.
- A restraining order enjoining the government from requiring employees performing emergency services to work without assurance that they will be paid.
- A requirement that the government redefine "emergency," because agencies are unlawfully designating employees as such when no bona fide emergency exists.

"It's time to bring in the third branch of government in time to set case law so that we don't have to go through this again," said Sturdivant. "No other employer on the planet would be allowed to do this."

The union has established a lockout hotline, 202/639-6475, for members. AFL-CIO Community Services liaisons are assisting federal employees with resources for food banks, housing, credit problems, emergency financial problems and stress counseling. The liaisons also are providing mini-training workshops for union shop stewards.

Medicare at heart of budget battle

By Colleen M. O'Neill

In the latest round of budget brinksmanship, Medicare beneficiaries are the group resting on the edge of the precipice.

The failure to agree on funding for government operations hinges on the attempt by the Republican-led Congress to include premium increases for Medicare Part B — to which President Clinton objects — in the legislation.

By vetoing the funding measure, Clinton killed the Medicare provision.

And concern is building that the Republicans' overall plans for Medicare and Medicaid — cuts coupled with increased costs for those receiving services — would have potentially devastating effects on current beneficiaries and active workers alike.

Experts expect that, as Medicare spending is squeezed and government contributions are brought down, employers and workers will be forced to make up the difference through cost shifting by hospitals and medical providers.

One widely reported estimate holds that businesses' health costs would increase by $90 billion over seven years if the GOP's proposed $270-billion cut holds up.

Business people have seen that before; in 1993, hospitals lost 11 percent on the treatment of Medicare patients, but made up for it by charging private insurance patients a 29 percent markup.

The threat to employers and working families comes on the heels of Congress's failure to enact comprehensive health care reform during its last session.

The pressure on businesses to cut health costs, should the current Medicare legislation become law, means that active workers and their families will be pushed toward health maintenance organizations and other cost-managed plans.

A Lewin-VHI study done for the union-backed National Leadership Coalition on Health Care Reform puts forth some similar projections. Lewin concludes that about 45 percent of projected reductions in Medicare payments to hospitals and doctors — at least $66 billion — would be shifted, adding 2.3 percent to the costs for employers, employees and self-insured people.

A byproduct of the further cost shifting, experts said, would be a sharp increase in the number of uninsured people, which now stands at 41 million. That adds to the vicious cycle, as uninsured individuals still require care — which is paid for by those still covered by insurance.

The AFL-CIO and its affiliates continue a full-scale attack against the threatened cuts in this vital program. In a rally in Lafayette Park, across from the White House, Executive Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson exhorted the crowd to send President Clinton the message that labor would back him in the fight.

Among the speakers at the Nov. 8 gathering was a program beneficiary, who declared, "I want to kill the deficit, not my grandchildren," and urged the president to "stick to your principles; you will not be alone."

The rally was sponsored by the National Council of Senior Citizens, Children's Defense Fund and other organizations. Other speakers included House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.) and leaders of consumer, farmer, senior and Latino groups.

Clinton wields GSP in child labor fight

The Clinton administration has proposed suspending duty-free treatment of certain Pakistani goods, including hand-knitted and woven carpets, because of "insufficient progress on internationally recognized worker rights," especially the child labor criteria spelled out under the Generalized System of Preferences.

"There is little doubt that child labor has assumed massive proportions in Pakistan," said a Labor Department report to Congress. There are about 500,000 children working in bondage conditions for the carpet industry in Pakistan. Most of the carpets they make are purchased by the United States, Germany and Sweden.

The AFL-CIO is supporting two-pronged legislation introduced by Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) that seeks to eliminate child labor both in the United States and abroad.

The AFL-CIO's Asian-American Free Labor Institute recently sponsored a conference that brought together representatives from Pakistan's trade unions, manufacturing and exporting businesses, government representatives and child labor advocates to press for adoption of the RUGMARK label.

This label, affixed to hand-woven carpets, certifies that products are made without child labor. The program also provides for educational opportunities for former child workers.

"This is a beginning to get carpet manufacturers who are guilty of labor rights violations to eliminate child labor," said Mark Hankin of AAFLI.

JOB SAFETY

OSHA apologizes

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has issued a rare apology to the family of a victim of a workplace tragedy, with the agency admitting its investigation was faulty.

OSHA Administrator Joseph A. Dear and Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich met Oct. 24 with the family of Patrick Hayes, a 19-year-old worker killed in a Florida corn silo in October 1993. His story has been featured in AFL-CIO Stand UP campaign ads urging support for stronger job safety laws.

Dear and Reich expressed their condolences to Dot and Ronald Hayes and explained changes in grain-handling regulations as a result of Patrick's case. An OSHA field inspector initially recommended citing Showell Farms Inc. for a willful violation and a $530,000 fine, but was overruled. The company ultimately paid a $42,000 fine and avoided other penalties.

Grain changes planned

OSHA is proposing to amend its grain-handling standard to ensure greater protection to workers against engulfment and entrapment in the grain-handling industry.

The move comes after an investigation into the death of 19-year-old Patrick Hayes, who suffocated while "walking the corn" in a silo in Florida.

OSHA's current standard protects employees in some situations, but not those entering "flat storage buildings or tanks" unless entry is made from the top of the structure. OSHA has learned that many entries — such as the one Hayes and his two co-workers made — come through doors lower than the top of the silos.

Exposure rule reopened

OSHA has reopened the rulemaking record for a final standard for worker exposure to methylene chloride, a potentially carcinogenic solvent.

OSHA issued a proposed rule for methylene chloride in November 1991 that would lower the permissible exposure limit from 500 parts per million to 25 ppm. The solvent is used primarily as a degreasing agent, and OSHA estimated that the rule would affect close to 200,000 workers.

The Halogenated Solvents Industry Alliance submitted materials on the subject to OSHA in September. Written comments on those materials must be postmarked by Nov. 24 and submitted in quadruplicate to the Docket Office, Docket No. H-071B, U.S. Department of Labor, Room N-2634, 200 Constitution Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20210, 202/219-7894. Comments of 10 pages or less may be FAXed to 202/219-5046, provided that the original and three copies are sent to the Docket Office also.

Small fine levied

Napp Technologies Inc. has been fined $127,000 by OSHA in the wake of an April explosion that led to the deaths of five workers represented by UNITE!.

Forty-one people were injured in the April 21, 1995, incident.

The fine was much smaller than that for similar explosions such as those at fertilizer and petroleum plants in Louisiana, but regional agency officials said standards for mixing chemicals did not specifically mention the two substances that erupted at the plant in Lodi, N.J.

Napp is contesting the fine and 18 accompanying citations.



Keith Mestrich/AFL-CIO

Pennsylvania AFL-CIO President William M. George (right) joins other marchers in a moment of reflection on the sacrifices workers have made on the job. The rally occurred in York, Pa., the home of Rep. William F. Goodling, chair of the House Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee.

'Safe Jobs' is a nationwide cry

Activities sharpen focus on Ballenger OSHA bill

By Colleen M. O'Neill

Activists for workplace safety used rallies, letter-writing campaigns, petitions and sit-ins to make their case against radical legislation in Congress that would gut the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

Nearly 1,000 trade unionists and the national Coalitions on Occupational Safety and Health took part in events across the nation during "Seven Days for Safe Jobs," held Nov. 6-12. Efforts were aimed at convincing legislators to oppose H.R. 1834, a measure introduced in June by Rep. Cass Ballenger (R-N.C.) that would emasculate OSHA, the Mine Safety and Health Administration and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

In San Francisco, more than 100 supporters rallied Nov. 10 outside the Fortune 500 Forum where Gov. Pete Wilson and Christian Coalition leader Ralph Reed were speaking. Handbills were distributed, and an auction of body parts — including Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich's right hand — was held.

On Nov. 9, 100 people gathered at the district office of Rep. Peter Torkildsen (R) in Salem, Mass., reading the names of workplace victims in his district while lighting a candle for each. While protesters rallied, 12 labor and community activists peacefully occupied the office until Torkildsen telephoned and sent a message via FAX that he opposed H.R. 1834 in its current form.

Meanwhile, activists protested that same day in front of GOP Rep. Peter Blute's office in Worcester, Mass., with the Grim Reaper, coffins, tombstones and a list of workers who had died in Blute's district during his time in office.

Elsewhere, approximately 75 unionists and allies rallied at Republican Rep. Bill Paxon's Buffalo office Nov. 9 to protest his co-sponsorship of the Ballenger bill and demand a meeting, but the lawmaker's staff refused to set one. The supporters signed a pledge to conduct a chain-fast — each person will fast for one day until Paxon removes his name as a co-sponsor.

Paxon's wife, Rep. Susan V. Molinari (R), also was targeted, as more than 100 activists demonstrated outside her Staten Island office earlier that day, seeking a commitment by Molinari to oppose H.R. 1834. The group will continue to lobby her against the bill.

In addition, several events were held in Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. In Doylestown, outside Philadelphia, about 50 people gathered Nov. 9 at Republican Rep. Jim Greenwood's district office to protest his co-sponsorship of the bill. The rally included a coffin adorned with the exhortation to "Bury the Ballenger Bill, Not Workers."

In York the next day, GOP Rep. William F. Goodling's office was visited by approximately 150 activists, who rallied in the town square and marched to the office. Goodling is the chair of the Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee that would handle H.R. 1834 once it is passed out of Ballenger's subcommittee.

Wisconsin activists kept up the heat on the delegation's three co-sponsors of the Ballenger bill: GOP Reps. Scott Klug, Steve Gunderson and Thomas Petri. In Milwaukee, 60 activists participated in a candlelight vigil Nov. 7 at the Wisconsin Workers Memorial, marking the deaths of 250 workers killed on the job this decade and denouncing H.R. 1834 and lawmakers' support for it.

In other events:

- More than 70 activists demonstrated Nov. 8 outside Republican Rep. Nancy Johnson's district office in New Britain, Conn.
- Nearly 70 people picketed outside the Lawrenceville, N.J., office of Rep. Richard A. Zimmer (R) on Nov. 1, seeking his opposition to H.R. 1834.
- Activists in Jamestown and Syracuse, N.Y., and Portland, Ore., held letter-writing and telephone campaigns.
- Unionists and job safety activists in Providence, R.I., held a news conference to released a report titled "Is a Hard Rain Gonna Fall?" outlining safety and health conditions in the state.

UNITE! card to help shoppers avoid sweatshop goods

UNITE! unveiled a new national public education campaign to help consumers learn whether the clothes they buy are made in sweatshops.

The key to the effort is a wallet-sized "Consumer's Guide to Decent Clothes" card that lists questions a customer can ask retailers about the conditions under which a garment was made. The card also includes a reminder that "the care tag tells you how to treat the garment, but not how the worker who made it was treated. A union label is one way to know."

The card was prompted by recent findings that sweatshops and child labor violations are proliferating in the United States and in the Central American free trade zones.

"The next time you're in a clothing store, look at a few labels," UNITE! President Jay Mazur said. "You'll find identical items — one made in America, the other in El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala or in other countries where workers are paid 50 cents an hour or less — all selling for the same price. The difference is the unconscionable profit being made from sweatshop labor."

The card "is a weapon that with the help of concerned organizations across the country, we propose to put in the hands of millions of people," Mazur said.

The questions on the card include whether the retailer knows how the workers who made the garment were treated, or whether the store has a code of conduct for suppliers that forbids child labor and specifies a living wage, and whether there is an independent monitor to make sure each side lives up to the code.

Meanwhile, Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich announced plans to establish a list of "Fair Labor Fashion Trendsetters," major clothing retailers and manufacturers who are making efforts to eradicate sweatshops.

Reich, who has met with UNITE! workers, in September convened a summit of the nation's largest clothing retailers to discuss cooperation in stemming sweatshops. He urged them to do more to assist law enforcement officials in their efforts to end sweatshop abuses.

He also promised the Labor Department will continue its crackdown in sweatshops across the country and its use of the hot goods provision of the Fair Labor Standards Act to prevent shipment of goods produced illegally.

Stung by union campaigns, business lashes out

Strategic approaches hit in Congress and the courts

By James B. Parks

The comprehensive corporate campaign, one of organized labor's most effective weapons against anti-union corporations, is under attack in Congress and the courts, and its future hangs in doubt.

Workers resorted to the campaigns because of the drastic tilt toward employers in the nation's labor laws. Using sophisticated nontraditional approaches to pressure companies, unions have racked up an impressive string of victories: Ravenswood Aluminum, Bituminous Coal Operators, Justice for Janitors, the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette and San Francisco Chronicle, among others. The tactics now are being used in a number of disputes, including the Detroit newspapers, Overnite and A.E. Staley.

"That corporate America is so frightened by comprehensive campaigns isn't only a measure of how effective we've become, it also is a stark reminder that a toothless, weakened labor movement remains a principal goal of the organized business community," said AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Richard L. Trumka, who has led the federation's Strategic Approaches Committee that coordinates the campaigns.

"Curtailing comprehensive campaigns is tantamount to repealing our freedom of speech," Trumka said.

Although corporate campaigns had been tried before, unions began refining and using the strategy more often in the last 10 years as corporate America and unfriendly courts methodically stripped away workers' weapons, leaving the deck heavily stacked in the employers' favor. The key strike weapon was dealt a serious blow by the Supreme Court sanction of "permanent replacements" for strikers, along with the growing threat of runaway companies and the outlawing of secondary boycotts.

This systematic dismantling of worker rights demonstrates, Trumka said, that U.S. labor laws "are the most antagonistic and one-sided" among the industrialized nations.

The tactics labor uses in corporate campaigns range from using proxies to press stockholder resolutions to informational picketing of executives' homes and the company's customers and suppliers, using the media to expose corporate wrongdoing and joining with other international unions and secretariats to pressure multinational conglomerate parents to settle.

Employers are trying to stifle such activities by filing racketeering suits against unions, claiming they are conspiring to destroy the business. One of the largest suits was filed by Food Lion, claiming the Food and Commercial Workers violated the Racketeering Influenced and Corrupt Practices Organizations Act (RICO) — arguing, amazingly, that union campaigns are designed to take over or to destroy the company.

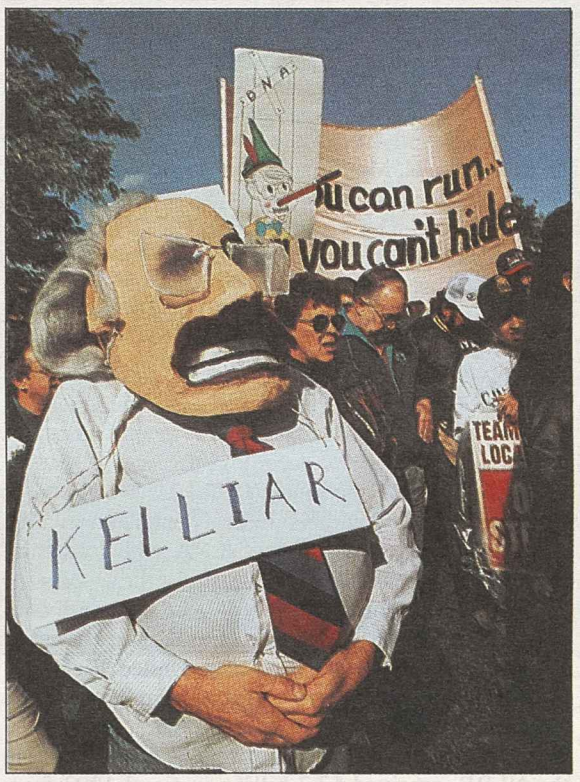
"Food Lion's suit is a blatant effort to cover up the stench of its foul misdeeds against its employees and customers with the spicy language of 'conspiracy' and 'RICO,' " said Richard Roesel, assistant general counsel for the UFCW. "Food Lion seeks to intimidate and silence its critics — including current and former employees, the private attorneys who may represent them and the reporters who find them credible."

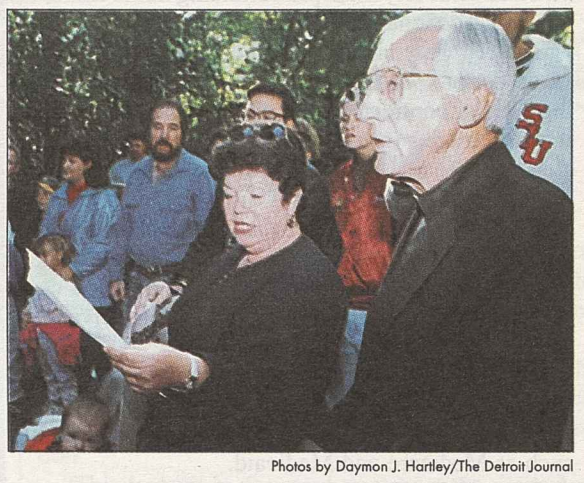
The $100 million suit against the UFCW and the AFL-CIO Food and Allied Service Trades Department was filed at about the same time that a coalition of labor and consumer groups called for a federal and state investigation into worker charges that Food Lion may have had prior knowledge of sanitary inspections of its stores last year.

The suit, filed July 25 in the U.S. District Court for Western North Carolina, claims the union and FAST conspired for more than a decade to cause "massive injury" to the grocery chain's business and reputation and "ultimately to drive Food Lion out of business."

The 177-page suit charges UFCW and FAST "maliciously and systematically" fed false allegations about the company to the media, and used disgruntled employees to entice ABC television's Prime Time Live news show to run a "sensational" piece that charged Food Lion with selling over-age meats and having unsanitary deli conditions.

The fallout from the show caused Food Lion to have reduced sales and profits, forcing the closing of 84 stores, the suit claims. A similar Food Lion suit against ABC was dismissed in March 1995.





Photos by Daymon J. Hartley/The Detroit Journal

Corporate campaign tactics have taken several forms in the fight for justice in the newspaper strike in Detroit. Pickets marched to the home of Detroit Newspaper Agency spokesman Michael Kelleher to accuse him of lying about the dispute (left), and joined religious leaders, like Catholic Bishop Thomas Gumbleton (above) to exert community pressure. Unionists also have pressed the Securities and Exchange Commission to examine possible insider trading by DNA chief Frank Vega and another Gannett board member.

The UFCW, which does not represent the workers, filed a 1991 complaint on their behalf with the U.S. Labor Department. Food Lion reached a record $16.2 million settlement with DoL for violating the Fair Labor Standards Act in that case.

Meanwhile, the Chamber of Commerce and other business groups have pressured Congress into holding hearings on the unions' corporate campaigns.

Companies get hearing on Hill

The House Economic and Educational Opportunities subcommittee on oversight and investigations, urged on by the American Trucking Association and the Chamber of Commerce, announced Sept. 21 it planned to hold hearings in November on whether federal labor laws should be amended to make corporate campaigns an unfair labor practice.

The announcement of the hearings signaled "corporate lobbyists are sponsoring another Capitol Hill spending spree to buy votes that will harm working people," said Teamsters President Ron Carey, whose union's campaign sparked the truckers' ire.

The business attack on corporate campaigns began in earnest after the IBT won a critical victory in which the National Labor Relations Board dismissed claims by the Ryder Corp. that an ongoing strike by 5,000 carhaulers was illegal. Ryder and two other targets of IBT campaigns — United Parcel Service and Union Pacific Corp. — are key players in the call for hearings and new anti-corporate campaign legislation.

UPS and Union Pacific, too, have run afoul of the federal labor laws. During the first six months of 1995, some 35,000 UPS employees were injured. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration cited the company more than 1,300 times since 1990, including some 400 citations for incidents that involved the possibility of death or serious injury.

In response to this enforcement action, the company launched a drive to destroy OSHA, hiring lobbyists to write legislation to weaken future OSHA enforcement powers.

Officials of Union Pacific's subsidiary, Overnite, including the CEO, were cited by the NLRB for serious labor law violations. In response, the company is leading the attack on the NLRB's budget and pushing legislation to gut the board's authority.

The first coordinated campaign was kicked off when former AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland appointed an ad hoc committee to find common ways to support the Steelworkers' strike against USX in 1986. That led to the formation a year later of the Strategic Approaches Committee, a subcommittee of the Committee on the Evolution of Work.

Corporate campaigns give unions vehicles to find key pressure points and to develop innovative techniques to push employers to bargain or settle. Federation staff, coordinated by the Organization and Field Services Department, are assigned to conduct activities on the ground.

Other staff conduct research to discover and exploit interlocking directorships. The campaigns also apply pressure through union pension plans that have invested in the company, a strategy used successfully in various campaigns.

Workers attend shareholders' meetings to inform them about the conduct of the company and its officials. This strategy has been used extensively in the lockout of 760 Paperworkers at A.E. Staley in Decatur, Ill. A subsidiary of British conglomerate Tate and Lyle, Staley locked out the UPIU members, formerly Allied Industrial Workers, on June 27, 1993.

The UPIU also is continuing its nationwide campaign of informational leafleting at Pizza Hut, KFC and Taco Bell, all subsidiaries of Staley's largest customer, PepsiCo, another successful corporate campaign strategy.

Corporate interests are particularly incensed at the strategy of workers attending stockholders' meetings and contacting a company's customers and suppliers. They have asked the Securities and Exchange Commission to allow publicly held companies to refuse to include union-sponsored stockholder resolutions in annual proxy statements.

International support is key

International support from European metal workers and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions was crucial to the successful end of the Mine Workers strike against the nation's coal operators. "As the companies go multinational, labor must also go multinational," Trumka said.

Replaced Steelworkers from Bridgestone/Firestone and their families marched in Tokyo at company headquarters to embarrass managers in their home country.

But the most effective use of international support may have been the multinational effort used to help bring the Ravenswood Aluminum lockout to an end.

After establishing a lockout fund for the 1,700 USWA members and sending in staff, the federation enlisted the help of European unions to find information on and pressure points against Ravenswood's owner, fugitive financier Marc Rich. The unions also set up an international boycott of Ravenswood's products. The combination of the international attention focused on Rich's operations and the resulting drop in sales eventually prompted Rich to settle.

One of the most successful corporate campaigns has been conducted without coordination with the Strategic Approaches Committee. The Service Employees' Justice for Janitors campaign has targeted multinational property owners who subcontract building services to nonunion companies, enlisting international and community support to organize workers in Los Angeles, the Silicon Valley and elsewhere across the country.

Beverly among worst contractor scofflaws

By James B. Parks

Federal contracts are routinely awarded to companies that violate U.S. labor laws, including the notorious Beverly Enterprises nursing home chain, the General Accounting Office reported.

Beverly was listed by the GAO as one of the 15 "most serious violators" among the companies receiving federal contracts based on the types of remedies it was ordered to carry out by the National Labor Relations Board, the number of workers affected and the history of violations.

Beverly, which has more than 700 facilities nationwide, has a series of labor violations dating back to 1979. The NLRB has heard four consolidated cases against Beverly that cover a decade and involve thousands of workers at 70 homes.

In addition to direct government contracts, the Arkansas-based company receives 80 percent of its almost $3 billion annual revenue from federal programs such as Medicare and Medicaid.

"Beverly Enterprises exists entirely on government funds . . . at the same time it has flagrantly and repeatedly violated the most basic human rights of workers. Companies like Beverly must be held accountable for illegal conduct," AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney and Food and Commercial Workers President Douglas H. Dority said in a letter to Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee Chair Nancy Kassebaum (R-Kan.)

"Working taxpayers should not be forced to subsidize Beverly's assault on workers," Dority said in a statement. "Outlaws should not be rewarded with government contracts."

"Beverly's record is a litany of virtually every possible labor law violation," said Sweeney, who has battled Beverly as president of the Service Employees. "Beverly has taken the most vulnerable workers and subjected them to the harshest and most vicious treatment — and it hasn't stopped yet."

Besides Beverly, four more of the 15 cited by the GAO — Fluor Daniel, Monfort, Overnite Transportation and Waste Management Inc. — have long histories of labor law violations. The violations include refusal to hire union members, creation of employer-dominated committees during a union organizing drive, firing union sympathizers and failure to abide by contract provisions calling for wage increases.

Eighty firms altogether violated the National Labor Relations Act and received more than $23 billion, about 13 percent of the $182 billion in federal contracts awarded in fiscal 1993, according to the GAO study, requested by Sen. Paul Simon (D-Ill.). He is the sponsor of S. 780, which would ban federal contractors "with a clear pattern and practice" of NLRA violations from doing business with the government for three years.

The bulk of contracts, about 90 percent, were concentrated among six companies — McDonnell Douglas, Westinghouse, Raytheon, United Technologies, AT&T, Fluor Corp. — that also rank among the top 20 in the value of federal contracts.

McDonnell Douglas, whose case is pending before the NLRB, received $7.7 billion in fiscal 1993 from the Navy and Air Force; Westinghouse was awarded $4.9 billion from the Energy Department; Raytheon's subsidiary, Beech Aerospace Services, got $3.5 billion from the Army; United Technologies subsidiary, Pratt & Whitney Aircraft, won $3 billion from the Air Force and Navy; AT&T received $1.4 billion from the Navy and General Services Administration; and Fluor subsidiary Fluor Daniel got $508 million from Energy.

The 80 violators that received federal contracts were cited by the NLRB a total of 88 times, some for multiple offenses. In 44 cases, the company interfered with workers' rights to organize. In 45, the board also found that a company had refused to bargain collectively with employee representatives. Thirty-three cases involved discrimination in hiring or condition of employment.

In about 40 percent of the cases, the NLRB ordered the companies to reinstate employees and ordered back pay in 50 percent, GAO reported. Nearly 1,000 individual workers and thousands of others in 12 bargaining units were affected by the violations. In fiscal 1993-1994, the board ordered 761 employees reinstated in the 88 cases, while 801 received back pay and 462 had benefits restored.

GAO recommended that the NLRB be allowed to collect judgments from violators from federal contract awards. Under current law, if a federal contractor does not comply with NLRB orders, the government has the option to withhold an amount equal to or less than the judgment from the money owed on the contract.

High court mulls chicken workers' legal coverage

The U.S. Supreme Court agreed to decide whether some of the employees of Tyson Foods Inc. are exempt from federal labor protections.

The justices let stand a federal appeals court ruling in Tyson vs. NLRB that required the poultry giant to negotiate over new pay and working conditions with the Teamsters, which represents 209 former Holly Farms drivers in three states. Tyson bought rival poultry producer Holly Farms in 1989 after a National Labor Relations Board election won by the IBT.

But the justices said they would review one aspect of the dispute — whether chicken catchers and haulers are "agricultural workers" not covered by federal labor law.

Tyson merged Holly Farms' transportation unit with its own and offered jobs to the Holly Farms drivers under new pay and working conditions. Tyson withdrew recognition of the IBT, which then called a strike against Tyson.

The union filed unfair labor practice charges against Tyson and Holly Farms. The NLRB ruled that Tyson violated labor law by refusing to negotiate with the union over changes in pay and working conditions resulting from the transportation merger.

The board also said Tyson unlawfully fired 47 drivers who turned down job offers, and they are entitled to reinstatement and back pay. The 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the board rulings.

In other court actions:

- The Justice Department asked the high court to permit a suit to pierce the corporate veil of a company that was the target of a judgment under the pension laws.

The case, Peacock vs. Thomas, involves a $187,000 judgment against D. Grant Peacock, majority stockholder of Tru-Tech Inc. The judgment by the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals came after pension plan participants were unable to collect benefits from the company and sued Peacock. The court found that Peacock and the textile machinery company he controlled siphoned off company assets to pay favored creditors.

- The 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld an NLRB ruling allowing an employer to bar nonemployees from handbilling on private property.

The Carpenters had appealed the board's ruling that Leslie Homes Inc. had the right to prevent the union from distributing handbills on its property.

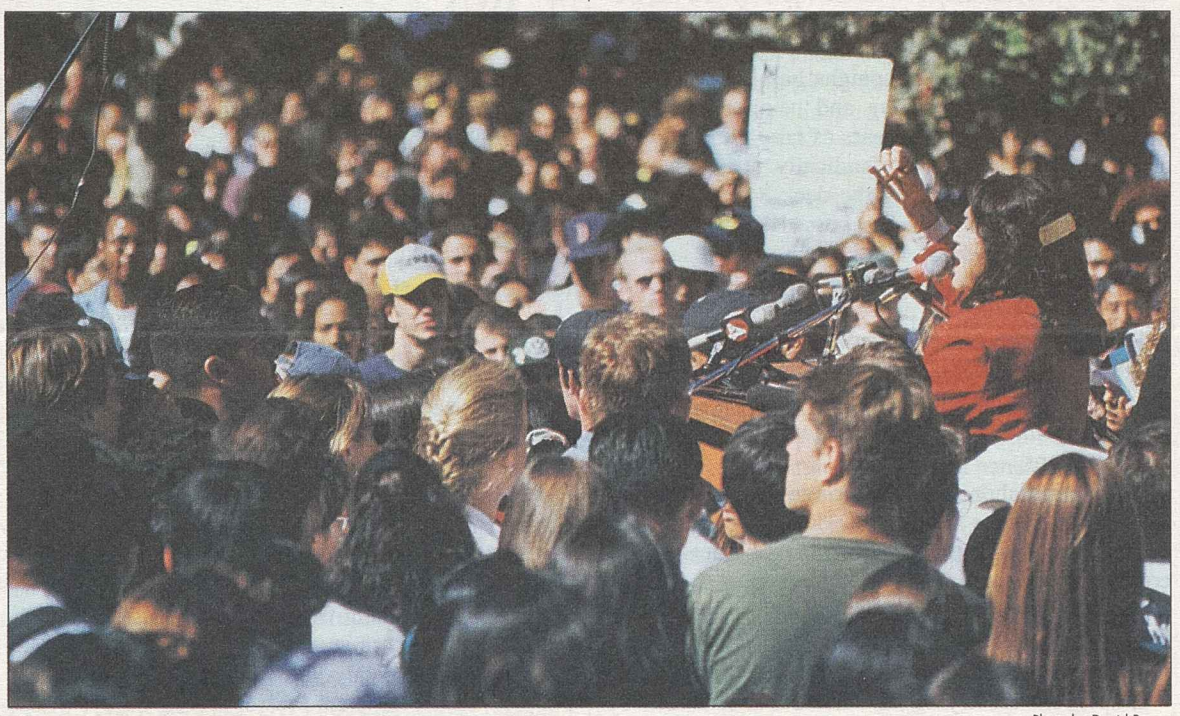


Photo by David Bacon

Farm Workers Vice President Dolores Huerta is surrounded by a sea of students at a Berkeley, Calif., rally protesting Gov. Pete Wilson's suspension of affirmative action policies. It was one of several rallies held around the state. Also speaking in Berkeley was state AFL-CIO Executive Secretary-Treasurer Jack Henning.

Ruling gives ESOP workers clout

DoL reaffirms workers' right to instruct trustees

By David Kameras

Workers who participate in employee stock ownership plans gained important protections for their voting rights, thanks to efforts by the AFL-CIO and several affiliated unions.

The federation has obtained a clarification from the Labor Department as to the fiduciary responsibilities of ESOP trustees that should make them more responsive to the interests of plan participants when voting the stock under the plans' "mirror provisions."

"Nearly all union-negotiated ESOPs contain pass-through voting provisions," and trustees are supposed to vote according to the wishes of the plan participants, said AFL-CIO economist John Zalusky.

"Over the past few years, these arrangements have been put in question," he said. "There have been instances where a trustee could vote the stock in a way that would cost the very workers who are plan participants their jobs if doing so improves the present value of the stock. When this occurs, it is outrageous, as often the trustees are voting with the workers' concessions."

"During the 1980s, we saw worker/voters stripped of their vote in tender offers and other proxy voting situations in the course of hostile takeovers and (leveraged buyouts), with often catastrophic results," added former Labor Department official Ian D. Lanoff, an attorney who helped secure the ruling. Now, trustees who choose to ignore worker/voter directions will have a legal burden to defend their actions, he said.

Brad Durkin of the Carpenters said the agency's interpretation is "a great step in enhancing the beneficiaries' economic interest in their ESOPs, as well as in defining corporate governance positions." His union has been active in efforts to democratize the stock ownership process "so that workers can exercise the full extent of their ownership."

Workers need to recognize the power ESOPs give them, power that can weaken a company's resistance to unionization, he said. DoL's language makes it clear that workers have the right to direct the trustees.

Assistant Labor Secretary E. Olena Berg said the protections mean that "the trustee must follow the plan provisions which require unallocated and non-directed allocated shares to be voted in accordance with participant instructions unless the trustee can articulate well-founded reasons why doing so would give rise to a violation of (ERISA) Title I or IV."

The agency's actions place new Labor Department restrictions upon ESOP trustees, which will benefit workers/voters in collectively bargained ESOPs, Lanoff said.



Jim Levitt/Impact Visuals

An enthusiastic crowd of unionists cheers a speech by AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Richard L. Trumka in a rally in Everett, Wash., that demonstrated an outpouring of solidarity for striking Machinists at Boeing. Some 2,000 attended the Everett rally, following a rally of 1,500 at the Boeing facility in Wichita, Kan.

Workers unified against Boeing

AFL-CIO leaders bring solidarity vow to rallies

By James B. Parks

The Machinists' strike against Boeing gained leverage with legal victories and an outpouring of solidarity from organized labor.

"We're going to spend whatever it takes, work as hard as it takes, and stick with it as long as it takes to help Boeing workers win the respect you have earned and deserve," AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney told rallies of striking workers in Everett, Wash., and Wichita, Kan.

"In doing so, we will send a massive message to every greedy, short-sighted employer in this country: honor American work, honor American workers, honor American working families," he said. "America works because we do, and when we stop working, America stops working!"

The extent of the federation's support for the strikers was underscored by the appearance with Sweeney at the rallies of the other two executive officers, Secretary-Treasurer Richard L. Trumka and Executive Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson.

This strike is about "shipping jobs and family futures overseas . . . squeezing the last ounce of productivity out of workers and then throwing them into the street," Sweeney said.

Over the last five years, Boeing's productivity has risen 30 percent, creating profits of $6.6 billion, Sweeney said. The workers have been repaid with the elimination of 18,000 jobs and now the company wants to "steal $914 a year out of the pocket of every employee by reducing health benefits. . . There's no respect for workers or the jobs they do or the contribution they make, and this strike is not going to end until we regain that respect," he said.

IAM President George J. Kourpias told the strikers their cause extends far beyond Boeing. "Newt Gingrich and his corporate friends like to say that we don't understand the global marketplace. We understand it's an excuse to move jobs all over the world at a moment's notice to take advantage of the lowest wages," he said.

"Every worker in the world should be united in solidarity because we all have a common enemy. And it's not other workers. It is the multinational corporations that pit worker against worker.

"All we're looking for is a partnership with practical solutions to keep aerospace jobs and technologies here," Kourpias said. "Not just because we are Americans, but because we've worked too long and too hard to build the Boeing Company."

On the legal front, the National Labor Relations Board issued an unfair labor practice complaint Nov. 6 against Boeing for refusing to provide information to the union on subcontracting, other job security issues and health care proposals. The board also said the timing of the company's health care proposal, presented at the last minute in negotiations, was evidence that Boeing was not bargaining in good faith.

Both sides met with federal mediators Nov. 8 to discuss Boeing turning over the information to the union. The company has not turned over any new information on the health care proposal since that meeting, according to IAM spokesman Matt Bates. The union is in constant contact with the mediators, he said, but no meetings are scheduled.

The union had expected the NLRB to issue an injunction against Boeing and to order the company to begin bargaining, Bates said, but that decision was delayed by the shutdown of the federal government.

The union filed another complaint with the NLRB Nov. 9, claiming the company illegally threatened striking workers with the loss of recall rights and provided misleading information on workers' rights to extended health insurance coverage. The complaint also claims Boeing failed to bargain on medical plan proposals.

The union said Boeing notified laid-off workers that if they did not report to work on or before Nov. 3, during the strike, they would not be allowed to return to work until Jan. 2, 1996. Another complaint filed Nov. 8 charges Boeing withheld vacation pay from workers who had scheduled vacations during the period the strike occurred.

The strike also has had an impact on the quality of Boeing products. A Nov. 3 chemical accident inside the Auburn, Wash., plant "raises the most serious concerns about the safety and quality of work being performed by Boeing during the strike," said IAM's lead negotiator Bob Gregory. "We very much hope that Boeing is not assigning unqualified and untrained people to perform work that could endanger the public or Boeing employees inside the plants," he said.

"Aerospace work is highly skilled and often potentially dangerous, and this is why the Machinists union places such great emphasis on safety in the workplace and on proper training," Gregory added.

At least 117 people, including some children, were treated at hospitals throughout the Seattle area after the accident released a plume of highly toxic nitric oxide over the community.

Boeing admitted that the accident was caused by two nonunion substitute workers who used the wrong container to transport a solution of nitric and hydrofluoric acids. Managers and supervisors are performing much of the work usually done by the striking workers.

Some 32,500 Machinists in three states walked out at Boeing Oct. 5 after overwhelmingly rejecting the company's latest contract offer.

AFA challenges Valujet in firing of 40 workers

By David Kameras

The Flight Attendants are suing Valujet Airlines after the Atlanta-based carrier fired as many as 40 employees, allegedly for union activity.

One of the victims was a union representative who got the boot nine days after he reported an apparent safety violation to the Federal Aviation Administration.

"This lawsuit is designed to protect the workplace rights of Valujet flight attendants," reported AFA President Patricia Friend. "At the same time, we invite the company to cease the terminations and work with the union to establish a more cooperative relationship, rather than an adversarial one."

The union is charging the airline with firing at least one union activist during the election campaign that culminated in the June 1 designation of AFA as bargaining representative for its 500 attendants, with others let go after their union support became known.

The alleged safety violation involved a family being asked to give up a seat for their five-year-old child to make room for an off-duty pilot traveling for pleasure, in violation of FAA rules requiring a seat and safety belt for all passengers two or older. When the flight attendant, who was a union representative for the Chicago base, reported the incident to his supervisor, he was called a liar and threatened with dismissal, a threat made good after he later made his report to the AFA and the FAA. A federal investigation is pending.

"Valujet Airlines may be the darling of Wall Street, but they are not above the law," Friend declared.

In other airline developments:

- As UAL Inc. investors met near Chicago's O'Hare Airport, AFA organized a Nov. 7 rally and picket line to support their upcoming contract negotiations and as a reminder that "25 percent of United's employees — 20,000 flight attendants — are not owners," said Master Executive Council President Kevin Lum.

"We want a contract that reflects our value to the company and recognizes our contributions to the financial success of United Airlines," he said.

- Air Line Pilots at Express Airlines Inc., a Northwest Airlink operation, have voted to authorize a strike if the union is released from talks by the National Mediation Board, which was called in last February.
- The clock is ticking toward a Nov. 25 expiration of a cooling-off period for ALPA and Federal Express Corp.
- AFA members at Business Express, a Delta Connection carrier, reached a tentative first contract Nov. 8.
- Leaders of the unaffiliated pilots union at Continental Airlines have voted to seek affiliation with ALPA.
- UAL Corp., the parent of employee-owned United Airlines, has dropped plans to make a bid for USAir.

TCU bargains raises, separation payments

Some 450 clerical workers at Grand Trunk Western railroad will see a 9 percent wage raise over the three-year term of a contract ratified by the Transportation Communications Union.

The pact also provides for a $7,000 lump-sum payment to compensate for anticipated job losses and transfer of up to 185 jobs to Canada. Notice of 63 position transfers already has been received by the union, according to Mike Fauss, TCU general manager at GTW.

Workers may receive a $60,000 voluntary separation allowance, plus earned vacation and sick leave for eligible retirees under the contract's terms, depending on seniority.

BARGAINING

UAW gains at Chrysler

Workers at Chrysler Corp.'s main windshield plant voted overwhelmingly Nov. 5 to end a four-day strike that had threatened to cripple the company's ability to build cars and trucks.

The UAW agreed to end the walkout in return for a company commitment to invest at least $35 million in new technology to keep the McGraw Glass Division plant in Detroit from becoming obsolete and to preserve jobs.

Some 1,000 members of UAW Local 227 walked out Nov. 1, stopping production of windshields and window glass used to build cars and trucks at all but two of Chrysler's North American assembly plants.

Chrysler also will bring back some work that had been contracted out, and will work with the UAW to refine existing manufacturing processes and develop new ones, the union said.

SW Bell pact ratified

After rejecting one version in September, Communications Workers ratified a new three-year agreement with Southwestern Bell in early November.

The contract is similar to the others reached with the regional Bell operating companies, with workers receiving an 11.2 percent increase in wages over term, greater job security and no changes in the night pay differential and medical deductibles. In fact, the contract contains pension raises and medical care improvements.

The contract, retroactive to Aug. 6, covers about 38,000 phone company workers in Texas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Kansas.

Meanwhile, 37,000 CWA members at Bell Atlantic remain engaged in a protracted struggle and continue to work without a contract. The company is seeking to force members to accept a pact containing less than the other RBOCs have agreed to, despite having reported $1.4 billion in profits in 1994.

RWDSU seals A&P pact

The Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union approved a new three-year contract that raises wages by $55 per week for 9,000 supermarket clerks in the New York City area.

The settlement applies to employees at 112 stores operated by Waldbaum Inc. and Food Emporium, both subsidiaries of the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Co.

Under the agreement, workers will receive a $20 per week wage increase retroactive to Oct. 1, when the previous contract expired. That will be followed by a $15 increase in the second year, an $800 lump-sum payment in the third year and a $20 raise in the last year.

The contract also increases the employers' health and welfare contributions.

IAM improves health care

The Machinists approved a new three-year contract that makes substantial changes in the health care benefits for employees of Amana Refrigeration Co.

Under the agreement, some 2,000 workers at the Amana, Iowa, plant will gain new vision and dental coverage and a new preferred provider organization program.

In lieu of a wage increase in the first year, about two-thirds of the employees will receive job upgrades as a result of an agreed-upon restructuring of the labor grades and job classifications. There will be a 3 percent across-the-board wage increase in the last two years with skilled employees receiving an additional 50 cents per hour in each of the last two years.

Flint Glass gains pact

The Flint Glass Workers approved a new five-year contract with Anchor Hocking Glass Co. that calls for wage increases and lump-sum payments for 1,000 workers.

Under the agreement, the employees at Anchor's plant in Lancaster, Ohio, will receive a 2.5 percent pay increase this year, with a guaranteed minimum hourly adjustment of 30 cents. They will receive a lump-sum payment of $1,300 in 1996, pay raises of 2 percent in the third year and 3 percent in each of the fourth and fifth years. The current average wage is $10.45 an hour.

The contract also improves the pension plan and does not change the health care benefits.



Photos by Daymon J. Hartley/The Sunday Journal

Striking Detroit newspaper workers and security guards with attack dogs face off in Roseville, Mich.

Strikers compete with Journal

Continued from Page 1

The group will focus on "pumping up" the campaigns already in place at both places, said Joe Uehlein of the AFL-CIO Industrial Union Department, a member of the task force.

The Paperworkers stepped up their campaign earlier this year against Staley's customers, particularly PepsiCo, which accounts for about 30 percent of the company's business, and has been leafleting fast food restaurants owned by PepsiCo, including Taco Bell, Pizza Hut and KFC.

"None of the Staley customers will want to be associated with a company that violates workers' rights, rips apart families' lives and destroys a community," Lane said.

Leinenkugel Brewery, a Miller subsidiary, is the latest company to drop Staley. The Chippewa, Wis.-based brewery continued to use Staley corn sweetener until members of Teamsters Local 662, which represents Leinenkugel workers, informed management about the lockout.

Some 760 UPIU members, formerly Allied Industrial Workers, were locked out on June 27, 1993. Staley demanded that workers agree to unlimited subcontracting, the loss of several hundred bargaining-unit jobs, 12-hour rotating shifts with no premium pay and the gutting of seniority protections. When the union balked, the workers were locked out and replaced by scabs.

The Staley workers have been without a contract since Sept. 30, 1992, and have lost more than $24 million in wages.

Although solidarity has been strong, many of the locked-out workers are suffering from the lack of a steady income, said Mark Brooks, UPIU's special projects director. "It has always been a struggle, but the workers have never given up. They are determined to get justice from Staley and save their families and their communities," he said. "But they need financial assistance if they are going to survive this fight."

The union established an Adopt-a-Family program two years ago, through which unions or other organizations can commit to contribute $100 to $600 a month. For more information on Staley's Adopt-a-Family program, call Barrie Williams at 217/872-2209. Donations should be made payable to Adopt-a-Family Program, c/o UPIU Local 7837, 3080-B Kandy Lane, Decatur, Ill. 62526.

The Sunday Journal's expected circulation of 300,000 would make it the third-largest newspaper in Michigan, behind the News and Free Press, which have refused to allow their circulation to be audited during the strike.

"We're all excited about this," said striking Free Press columnist Susan Watson, who will serve as co-editor of the paper. "It's going to give strikers a chance to do what they do best — put out a great newspaper." Striking News investigative reporter Norm Sinclair will be the other co-editor.

"When established papers suffer the kind of circulation drop experienced by the News and Free Press, businesses look for other ways to reach consumers," said Sunday Journal Publisher Bill Brown. The need for an alternative voice is "especially acute here in Detroit, where there are thousands of union households in which people are just not interested in reading a paper produced by replacement workers," he said.

Brown served as publisher of several successful strike papers for The Newspaper Guild in Pittsburgh and Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

Financed by the international unions, the Sunday Journal will be written by striking TNG members, composed by striking Communications Workers and distributed by striking Teamsters. The paper will be owned by a nonprofit corporation chaired by Don Kummer, administrative officer of TNG Local 22. The Graphic Communications Union also is involved in the strike.

While the Sunday Journal is gearing up, the Free Press and News stand to lose about $112 million by the end of the year, according to the IBT. P. Anthony Ridder, CEO of Knight-Ridder, which owns the Free Press, admitted a $36 million loss in the third quarter and projected another $20 million loss in the fourth quarter.

Knight-Ridder and News owner Gannett Corp. jointly operate the newspapers' business functions and evenly split the papers' profits and losses. Therefore, Gannett's losses should be projected to be $56 million as well, the IBT said.

Ridder also acknowledged that the papers have lost 20 percent of their daily circulation. More than 300 advertisers have dropped out of the papers, including several national chains; Fretter's and two more Jeep-Eagle dealers recently pulled out.

The striking unions plan a major leafleting effort at remaining advertisers on the day after Thanksgiving, traditionally the biggest shopping day of the year. AFL-CIO regional offices, along with the IBT and Jobs with Justice, already have leafleted more than 200 Kmart stores in 30 states to inform customers the chain is advertising in the scab papers.

The deep loss of advertising revenue during the holidays will be a big blow to the papers. Typically newspapers generate half of all ad revenues during the last quarter of the year.

The 2,600 employees of the News and Free Press walked out July 13 after negotiations failed to produce a new agreement. Management and imported scabs from other papers are producing the Free Press and News. Hired union-busting security guards are delivering the papers, as well as harassing pickets.

The striking newspaper workers, too, need financial help from their fellow union members. Unions and individuals are asked to send contributions to adopt a striking family. For information, call 313/896-2600. To make a contribution, write the DNA (Detroit Newspaper Association) Striker Relief Fund, Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO, 2550 West Grand Blvd., Detroit, Mich. 48208.

The AFL-CIO has developed an Adopt-a-Family video that explains how this vital program works for striking families and who to contact for more information on how to become sponsors. The video (Catalog Code: LVBS-041) is available for $10 from the Labor Institute of Public Affairs, 815 16th St. N.W., Suite 206, Washington, D.C. 20006; or call 202/637-5334 or 800/242-8646. District of Columbia residents should add 5.75 percent sales tax.

STATE AFL-CIOs

Alabama elects Berkhalter

Birmingham, Ala.

The Alabama AFL-CIO elected Douglas S. Berkhalter of the Paperworkers as its president, replacing Sidney H. Hannah, who did not run for election.

Billy J. Tindle was re-elected secretary-treasurer. The election of an executive vice president is being challenged. The 577 delegates also rejected two constitutional changes after lengthy debate.

A special banquet was held to honor the state federation's longtime president, James Albright, who died last November.

Speakers at the Oct. 16-18 convention included Steelworkers President George Becker, Gov. Fob James, Rep. Glen Browder (D-Ala.), Tennessee AFL-CIO President James G. Neeley, A. Philip Randolph Institute President Norman A. Hill, Lt. Gov. Don Siegelman, State Sen. Roger Bedford and state Supreme Court Justice Terry Butts.

Trumka rallies Hoosiers

Indianapolis

Hoosier conventioneers heard from new AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Richard L. Trumka and voted to raise per capita 2 cents during their gathering in early November.

The per capita increase approved by the 360 delegates goes into effect Jan. 1. In other action, resolutions supporting HRDI, school-to-work programs, Lt. Gov. Frank O'Bannon for governor, fair treatment for air traffic controllers and protection for workers' privacy were passed.

Delegates also backed a resolution setting forth the state federation's legislative priorities for the next session, including opposing right to work, strengthening prevailing wage laws, improving workers' compensation, gaining fair share for teachers and collective bargaining for public employees and opposing efforts to weaken occupational safety and health.

Other speakers included Gov. Evan Bayh and his lieutenant, O'Bannon, the minority leaders in the Indiana house and senate, and AFL-CIO Regional Director Charles Stott.

Hawaii taps Rodrigues

Delegates to Hawaii's one-day convention unanimously re-elected Gary W. Rodrigues as president and selected 42 vice presidents.

The 130 delegates also passed resolutions opposing contracting out and privatization of government services and French nuclear testing in the Pacific, calling for a boycott of French goods sold in the islands until the testing is stopped. Resolutions supporting legalized gambling, the AFL-CIO's Human Resources Development Institute and the Center for Labor Education and Research were among those passed.

Speakers to the 16th biennial convention included Hawaii Senate President Norman Mizuguchi and AFL-CIO Regional Director David Sickler.

Rights sticking point on fast track

By David Kameras

The AFL-CIO is working to block efforts in Congress to grease the skids for ramming through new international trade agreements without regard to worker rights.

Rep. Philip Crane (R-Ill.), chairman of the House Ways and Means subcommittee on trade, is putting together a package of trade measures, including "fast-track" negotiating authority, while rejecting worker rights or the environment as principal negotiating objectives, calling them "extraneous issues" that have no place in trade agreements.

In a letter to U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor, AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney urged that the administration "maintain the position that worker rights and the environment are central to the process of international economic integration and need to be addressed directly in trade negotiations."

"Linking worker rights and labor standards to trade has been a long-held, but unfulfilled, bipartisan negotiating objective of the United States," he said. "It is not a new or extraneous issue. As progress is made toward the development of a rules-based international trading system, standards for workers are certainly as important as standards for capital.

"Negotiating authority that ignores worker rights would send the powerful signal to our trading partners that the United States is not serious about this issue," Sweeney said. "More importantly, such an action would tell workers in the United States that trade negotiations are only about protecting the interests and property of business, and that their legitimate concerns will be ignored."

That certainly was the case with the North American Free Trade Agreement negotiated by the Bush administration, as evidenced Nov. 8 in San Antonio during a seminar on how unions are legally registered, when the Mexican government and Sony Corp. were accused of conspiring to violate the rights of workers at Sony facilities in Nuevo Laredo.

"In Mexico, official unions usually team up with employers and use the 'exclusion clause' to prevent more independent and aggressive unions from convincing the workers to repeal their association with the official union in favor of a new union," said labor attorneys Paul Curtis and Alfredo Gutierrez Kircher in a report for the U.S. Labor Department.

"Frequently, workers will be discharged from employment because the union advises the employer that the employee does not belong to the union," they said.

The conference, in which the AFL-CIO, the Electronic Workers and a coalition of human rights groups participated, was one of three agreed to under "ministerial consultations" under NAFTA, prompted by U.S. concern over firings and obstructions placed in the way of independent union registration. It followed contradictory advice offered by Mexican officials at an earlier meeting as to whether Mexican workers can register a new union if they are dissatisfied with their representation.

"The ministerial consultations are exposing the multiple obstacles to registering independent unions in Mexico," said Martha Ojeda, a spokeswoman for the Sony workers. "It is time for the Mexican and U.S. labor secretaries to go beyond holding seminars and devise concrete steps to open up the registration process so that Mexican workers will be free to obtain democratic union representation."

Adherents to free-trade dogma frequently point to trade agreements as a source of salvation for economic woes. Yet NAFTA has proven to be more of a curse than a blessing.

The Labor Department has certified more than 42,000 workers for NAFTA Transitional Adjustment Assistance, but many think this is a gross understatement of those displaced by the pact.

Economist Gary Hufbauer, whose forecasts of job growth were used by the White House as a justification for pressing the free-trade case, now thinks that the trade deficit with Mexico has resulted in the loss of 225,000 U.S. jobs. Based on balance-of-payments data for the first eight months of the year, that trade relationship, once marked by a durable surplus, will contribute to a projected $185 billion overall deficit for the year, said AFL-CIO economist Greg Woodhead.

Union workers back at maquiladora

After intense pressure from the international labor community, a Korean-owned maquiladora factory in the Dominican Republic effectively recognized the unionization of its workers, rehiring union leaders with back pay and scheduling contract negotiations.

Workers at the Bonahan Co. factory, which makes clothing for the Jones Apparel Group and its tony "Jones of New York" label, walked off the job after charging their employer with abusing them and refusing to negotiate with their union.

At the same time, the company and its Caribbean and Central American neighbors stood to be rewarded with new tariff breaks being pushed by Republicans in Congress.

"The last thing any worker needs is new laws that make it more profitable for employers to abuse them," said AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney, who called on the U.S. and Dominican Republic governments to ensure that worker rights provisions in existing trade laws are enforced.

Incidents of abuse, confirmed by a government labor inspector's report, included physical abuse of female workers, the use of two-way mirrors in bathrooms to spy on employees, firing of workers for union activity, refusal to pay legally mandated overtime pay, excessively hot work areas and forced long shifts without access to restrooms.

— David Kameras

Organized labor helps engineer 'first of many' GOP losses

Continued from Page 1

to union members in September and October, and made 83,000 phone calls during that time.

A similar effort went into the other gubernatorial race, in which incumbent Mississippi Gov. Kirk Fordice (R) fought off the surging COPE-endorsed Dick Molpus (D). COPE had three national staff and 10 time-release workers from several unions there, sent out 44,000 pieces of mail and made 20,000 phone calls in the last two months before Election Day. Molpus came from 20 points behind to win 45 percent of the vote and the Democrats maintained a large margin of control in the state Senate.

Perhaps symbolic of the dramatic turn away from the Republicans was the loss of Staten Island Borough President Guy Molinari (R-N.J.), father of U.S. House Rep. Susan V. Molinari, a Gingrich disciple on many issues. Molinari's 2-1 loss in his race for district attorney prompted New York City AFL-CIO President Brian McLaughlin to call on Rep. Molinari to heed the lesson that voters delivered.

"Congresswoman Molinari has a choice," McLaughlin said. "Will she support Newt Gingrich or will she support the people of her district?"

In the New Jersey House races, Democrats picked up three seats, but Republicans still have a 50-30 advantage. COPE Regional Director Judith McFatter coordinated the efforts of 10 activists released by the Carpenters, UNITE!, IBEW, AFSCME, IUOE, the Laborers and the Plumbers and Pipefitters.

The Virginia legislature was considered a political bellwether this year, with conservative Republican Gov. George Allen urging voters to reverse Democratic control of both Houses so he could carry out the GOP "contract" at the state level, where the legislature had rejected his radical cuts in education programs. Numerous AFL-CIO staff helped, particularly in Northern Virginia, where they concentrated on five House districts, all victories for Democrats.

In the end, "Democrats were victorious in thwarting Republican attempts to gain control of both the state Senate and House," said COPE Director Richard Walsh. Democrats kept their 52-47 edge in the House but lost two Senate seats to leave a 20-20 tie. However, the lieutenant governor, the president of the Senate, is a Democrat, and would cast tie-breaking votes.

Sweeney predicted the GOP losses were "the first of many to come." He has promised to intensify labor's political activity for next year's presidential and congressional sweepstakes, and is making plans to create a national political training center that will help put more activists in the field.

The rank and file clearly are ready for the political fight. IBEW Local 212, representing workers in Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana, for example, not only helped elect the Kentucky governor and a worker-friendly Cincinnati city council, but elected five of its own in five separate local contests. Local 212 members won four city council races in Ohio and one in Indiana.

Maine voters gave a no-confidence vote to conservative Republican rule, electing Democrats in two special elections and reversing control of the state House. They also rejected the referendum that would have allowed discrimination against gays, a proposition strongly opposed by labor.

Labor also won its fight to keep the name of Cesar Chavez Street in San Francisco, when voters rejected a referendum that would change the name back to Army Street. Labor's endorsed candidate for mayor, former House Speaker Willie Brown, narrowly defeated incumbent Frank Jordan in a three-way race, but the lack of a majority will force a runoff in December.

In Washington, voters overwhelmingly supported a labor-backed referendum to reverse a new law that would have required the state to compensate property owners for value lost to local or state regulation. Unions also were working hard for Cleo Fields, a Louisiana Democrat involved in a Nov. 18 runoff for governor with Republican Mike Foster, who edged Fields in the Oct. 21 primary.

Labor presses to raise wage floor as need grows

By David Kameras

Amid mounting evidence that workers are falling further behind, the AFL-CIO blasted the Senate for failing to bring to a vote a proposal to raise the minimum wage.

Labor was working hard at the state level, meanwhile, successfully lobbying for a veto override in Massachusetts, where the minimum wage will rise $1 over two years, bringing that state's wage floor to $5.25.

"We are delighted that the legislature demonstrated their concern for the needs of the working poor," said Massachusetts AFL-CIO President Joseph Faherty. "It is unfortunate that the governor is so out of touch with the realities of American economic life that an override vote was required."

In Oregon, labor and its allies filed a ballot measure initiative Nov. 6 that would raise the state's minimum wage to $6.50 an hour by 1999. The coalition has until July 6, 1996, to gather the necessary 73,261 signatures to get the initiative on the ballot.

The Clinton administration redoubled its efforts to get a congressional vote on its proposal to raise the minimum wage from $4.25 to $5.15 an hour over two years. Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich urged workers to call their senators, and the department set up a toll-free telephone number that was in operation until Nov. 17.

The agency's action followed the Senate's inability to get the 60 votes needed to consider a resolution calling for debate and a vote by the end of the legislative session.

"The Senate's failure to even allow a vote on increasing the minimum wage while rushing to give a $224 billion tax break to large corporations and wealthy individuals speaks volumes about whose side they're on," said AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney.

"America needs a raise," he said. "Instead they got the cold shoulder from most Republicans in the Senate."

Sweeney warned that the more than 13 million members of affiliated unions will know who voted against the measure. "This vote will be a cornerstone of the massive coordinated political education campaign I will have the federation launch next year," he said.

The need for an increase has seldom been greater. Minimum-wage workers today earn less as a percentage of average hourly earnings than at any time in the past 40 years. And new data prove what workers have known all along: the benefits of an expanding economy have yet to trickle down into their paychecks.

The Gross Domestic Product surged an annualized 4.2 percent in the third quarter. And productivity in manufacturing jumped 6.2 percent, 4 percent for the 12-month period. Yet over the year, real hourly compensation rose a razor-thin 0.5 percent. Unit labor costs actually fell 2.3 percent in the third quarter, 1.6 percent over the year, continuing a downward trend, according to AFL-CIO chief economist Rudy Oswald.

"Productivity growth has been strong for the past three years, with the gains particularly high in 1995," he said. "But these gains have not been shared with workers."

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that for the 12 months ending in September, private-sector wages, salaries and benefits rose a tiny 2.7 percent, the smallest gain in the 15 years such data have been collected. Factoring in inflation, real wages increased only 0.2 percent. Blue-collar workers averaged only a 2.3 percent increase, falling short of the rise in the cost of living.

Not surprisingly, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development has revealed that the United States has the widest income distribution gap among 16 of the world's major market economies.

"While economic growth and corporate profits continue to accelerate, wages are idling at the same speed as inflation," Reich said. "With profits, productivity and GDP up, there's room for workers and their families to get a raise without driving the economy off the road of steady, non-inflationary growth."

The disparity has apparently surprised even Alan Greenspan, chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, which in recent years has been pursuing a policy under which controlling inflation takes precedence over employment and wage growth.

"Looking back across the past several decades, there has been a very strong tendency for the real hourly compensation of workers to move up in step with increases in labor productivity," he noted.

Wage increases of 3.2 percent were reported in the third quarter for major collective bargaining settlements, a big increase from before. For contracts covering 5,000 or more workers, wage and benefit increases averaged 4.8 percent in the first year and 3.7 percent over the contracts' life.

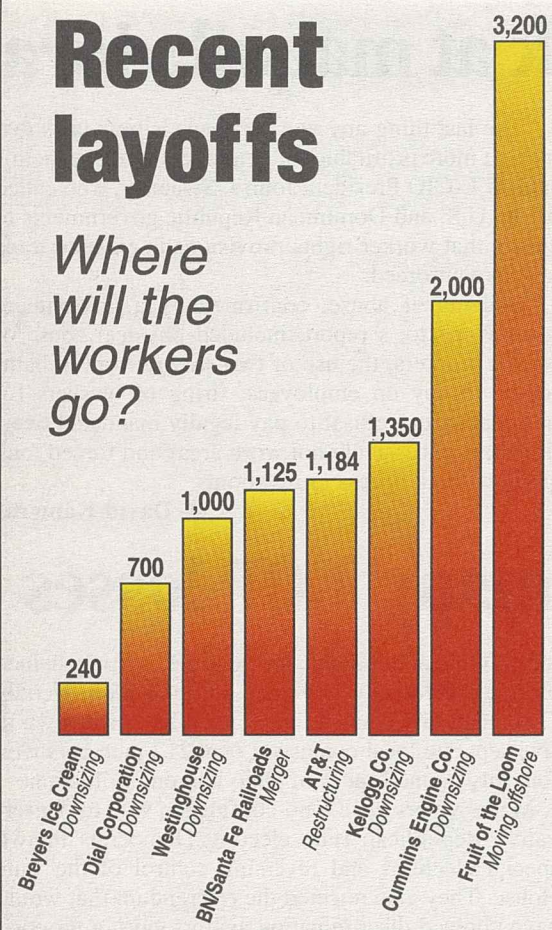
However, Oswald cautioned, "while these settlements are running almost 1 percent higher than earlier settlements, it's unlikely that we've turned the corner in terms of tough negotiations."

Meanwhile, the BLS is planning next year to trot out an experimental formula for its Consumer Price Index, which will likely have the effect of reducing the appearance of inflation in the economy, a priority of Republican lawmakers intent on cutting entitlements linked to the measurement tool.

DATA

Recent layoffs

Where will the workers go?



While employers added 116,000 workers in October, mostly in the service sector, many companies continued their relentless trend toward "downsizing."

Unemployment Rate	
October	5.5 percent
From September	-0.1 percent
Consumer Prices (CPI-W)	
October	+0.3 percent
September	+0.2 percent
Producer Prices (Finished Goods)	
October	-0.1 percent
September	+0.3 percent

AFL-CIO NEWSGRAFIC

Jobs growth slow; layoff rolls grow

Job security is fading in uncaring economy

The unemployment rate in October declined slightly to 5.5 percent, matching the level set in March, but the forecast was anything but rosy.

The actual growth in jobs was an anemic 116,000, according to establishment survey data provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and manufacturing employment dropped by 20,000, the second monthly decline. Job losses in that sector have totaled 200,000 since March.

"The overall picture is very mixed, with hours of work strong and employment growth practically nil, but unemployment down a tad," said AFL-CIO chief economist Rudy Oswald.

Oswald noted that while 7.2 million workers were officially unemployed, "another 1.6 million workers wanted work but couldn't find it, and another 4.4 million workers wanted full-time jobs but only could find part-time jobs," making a total of 13.2 million affected by total or partial unemployment. Only 33.5 percent of the unemployed received unemployment insurance.

Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich, while lauding the drop in the jobless rate, warned that compensation has yet to reflect the purported increase in the demand for labor.

"In this looking-glass economy, workers' wages and benefits continue to show essentially no increase after adjusting for inflation, as this week's Employment Cost Index reveals," he said. **(See story, this page.)** "Productivity is up and profits are healthy, while there is no sign of accelerating inflation.

"Given these facts, there is room for a raise. Economic recovery must boost the fortunes of every American," Reich said.

Swelling the ranks of the jobless was the unrelenting string of announced plant closings and "downsizings" that have come to characterize the modern American economy. The outplacement firm of Challenger, Gray and Christmas Inc. reported that U.S. corporations terminated 41,335 jobs in October, 25 percent more than in the month before.

"Clearly, employers have the upper hand in today's business environment," said Executive Vice President John A. Challenger. "Pressures created by international competition, merger mania and technological change that allows for greater centralization of functions have left many employees with the feeling that job security no longer exists."

According to the American Management Association, only 6 percent of companies laying off workers in 1994 hired some of them back for their old jobs.

The Kellogg Co. is getting rid of 1,350 workers in California, Michigan and Tennessee, their burden eased somewhat by an enhanced retirement and severance package negotiated by the Grain Millers.

Unrepresented workers had fewer options. Burlington Northern and Santa Fe railroads announced that their merger would result in the loss of 1,125 jobs for salaried, nonunion personnel.

Fruit of the Loom Inc. is closing six domestic plants and cutting back other operations, at the cost of 3,200 jobs. Some 90 temporary workers at a General Motors plant in Baltimore also are losing their livelihood.

When Unilever, a Netherlands multinational, bought Breyers Ice Cream two years ago, it led workers at its West Philadelphia site to believe their jobs were secure, and kept them working seven days a week for weeks at a time during last winter's normally slow season. Then on Oct. 27, it all came to an end for the 240 workers at the 71-year-old, profit-generating plant.

Diesel engine manufacturer Cummins Engine Co. said it will lay off 2,000 workers here and abroad. The memberships of two unaffiliated unions representing some 4,500 employees in southern Indiana are likely to be affected.

In addition to manufacturing, government suffered a loss of 5,000 jobs. Mining basically was unchanged, while construction increased by 28,000 and services a big 57,000, almost half of which were in health services.

Average weekly hours of work jumped sharply in October, moving 0.2 hours to 34.7 hours. Average hourly earnings rose by six cents and over the year by 34 cents for a composite increase of 3 percent.

Of 11 large states, unemployment rose in California (7.2 percent to 7.8 percent), Florida (5.6 percent to 6.7 percent), New Jersey (5.7 percent to 5.8 percent) and Texas (6.1 percent to 6.2 percent). It remained steady in Massachusetts (5.3 percent) and dropped in Illinois (5.4 percent to 4.8 percent), Michigan (4.8 percent to 4.4 percent), New York (6.8 percent to 6.3 percent), North Carolina (4.7 percent to 3.9 percent), Ohio (5.2 percent to 4.7 percent) and Pennsylvania (6.4 percent to 5.1 percent).

— David Kameras

NEWSMAKERS

Two of the workers featured in the Labor Institute of Public Affairs' Labor Day special, "Working for Victory," were invited to represent "World War II Workers on the Homefront" at two Washington events. Helen Boyajiian, who produced parachutes in Lowell, Mass., attended the ceremony Nov. 11 in which President Clinton dedicated the World War II Memorial. Ruth Klein Staples, who appeared in the Brunswick segment on trains, earlier had been invited to attend a joint meeting of Congress. "Working for Victory" was one of the most popular Labor Day specials produced by LIPA, appearing on 128 public television stations around the country.

AWARDS

Kalash Satyarthi will receive the 1995 Human Rights Award Laureate from the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Center for Human Rights. Satyarthi heads the South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude, an organization determined to end child labor.

DEATH

Michael Bruton, 59, president of the Chicago AFL-CIO, died from complications of asbestos-related cancer.

"His death teaches us that health and safety on the job counts," said Don A. Turner, secretary-treasurer of the city central body. "Exposure to asbestos on the job many years ago caused his death."

Bruton began his union career in 1954 as an apprentice electrician. Moving through the ranks, he was elected to the Electrical Workers Local 134 Executive Board in 1974. In 1980, Bruton was elected vice president of the local and then secretary-treasurer in 1987. He was appointed assistant to the president of the Chicago AFL-CIO in 1986 and elected president in 1994.

He is survived by his wife, nine children and 12 grandchildren.

Rosenthal named political director

AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney has appointed Steve Rosenthal to be political director of the AFL-CIO, effective Dec. 1.

Rosenthal, 42, currently is associate deputy secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor, where he has been a key advisor to Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich on labor-management issues. He served previously as deputy director at the Democratic National Committee and, for 12 years, held key positions with the Communications Workers.

"Steve will head up the AFL-CIO's political work, with responsibility for implementing the political goals laid out in our platform for change," Sweeney said.

Richard Walsh, COPE director since 1993, will be deputy director of the department. That rounds out the top government affairs team that includes Gerald Shea, assistant to the president for government affairs, and Peggy Taylor, AFL-CIO legislative director.

Sweeney also named Mike Gildea, 48, as acting director of the AFL-CIO organization and field services department, replacing Joseph Shantz, who resigned.

Gildea, an assistant director in the department since 1991, will help conduct a review of the field services operations as part of Sweeney's plan to create separate departments for organizing and field services. A public search is under way for directors for both departments.

Shantz had been director of the combined department since 1990, after being named assistant director in 1988. He joined the federation as a field representative in 1980.

UNION NEWS

ATDD elects new leaders

The American Train Dispatchers Department of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers put in place a new leadership team when its 27th general assembly convened Oct. 23-25 in Las Vegas.

Elected president was Les A. Parmelee, an international representative who beat back a challenge by Secretary-Treasurer Robert L. Rafferty. Rafferty's post is being filled by Conrail General Chairman F. Leo McCann, who defeated Robert M. Sermak, who moves from assistant to the president to international representative. Incumbent President Robert J. Irvin and Vice President (West) Dean Bennett stepped down, ending 48 years and 44 years, respectively, of combined railroad and union service.

In other elections, Vice President (Northeast) William A. Clifford was re-elected by acclamation, Southern Pacific Railroad General Chairman David Volz was elected vice president (West) by acclamation and Norfolk Southern Railroad General Chairman Jim Parker defeated incumbent H. Ed Mullinax for vice president (Southeast).

Gary Melton of Burlington Northern Railroad, Vernon Skeans of CSX and Gary S. Wasserman of Port Authority Trans-Hudson were elected trustees. Chosen as alternate trustees were James G. Porter of Northeast Illinois Regional Commuter and Gerry Miskowicz and Ron R. Bailey of Southern Pacific Railroad.

The 71 delegates also took up 50 constitutional amendments and 15 resolutions before completing their proceedings.

L.A. privatization fought

AFSCME Local 3090, Electrical Workers Local 11 and Service Employees Local 347 are leading a campaign to protect the Los Angeles port from the threat of privatization.

A report to the City of Los Angeles Harbor Commissioners by Virginia-based Booz-Allen & Hamilton recommends privatizing the port's engineering, environmental management and construction management divisions. The firm also suggested closing the port-sponsored child care center operated by the YMCA.

The unions have formed a coalition, The Labor/Community Coalition to Protect Our Port, that includes several neighborhood and community groups.

Expansion to yield jobs

The Burbank, Calif., City Council unanimously approved Warner Bros. Studio's $800 million expansion project, capping labor's yearlong effort to push the deal through.

The studio expansion project will add nearly 10,000 jobs to the area over the next 20 years. Various unions worked closely with Mee Lee, director of government relations at Warner Bros., to assure that the council gave the project the green light.

"This project couldn't have been done without the labor movement," said Lee. "They were the backbone of the community support for it."

Grants enhance cooperation

The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service has awarded $1.75 million to 18 companies and labor groups to create or expand labor-management committees, programs or existing panels.

The FMCS grants program provides funding to encourage collaborative management-labor relations and problem-solving.

For the first time, the FMCS used a customer grants review board representing companies, unions and others in the labor-management community for the selection process. Out of the 18 recipients, six organizations received $100,000 awards:

Bituminous Coal Operators/Mine Workers in Silver Spring, Md; Maryland Mass Transit Authority/Transit Union and Office and Professional Employees/AFSCME in Baltimore; Connecticut Department of Education/AFT; Building and Construction Trades Department, AFL-CIO; Southern Paper Industry Labor Management Council in Birmingham, Ala; and Cornell University/League of Voluntary Hospitals/Service Employees District 1199.

There were 119 applicants for the awards, which were granted on a competitive basis and may be used to support committees at the plant level, on an area or industrywide basis, or in the public sector.

Assassin fells Rabin, 'great force for peace'

U.S. labor mourned the loss of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, "a great force for peace and freedom," AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney said.

Rabin's assassination was intended to derail the Middle East peace process that American labor has supported from the beginning.

As a leading figure in the Labour Party and a former ambassador to Washington, Rabin was a partner in forging the close ties that exist between the AFL-CIO and Histadrut, the Israeli labor federation.

In a message to Histadrut Secretary-General Haim Ramon, Sweeney said, "Our thoughts are with you, your membership and all other Israelis who struggle for peace, fight for democracy and live in hope," he said.

Sweeney, together with Secretary-Treasurer Richard L. Trumka and Executive Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson, visited the Israeli Embassy to sign its condolence book and express the federation's sympathies to Ambassador Itamar Rabinovic.

Communications Workers President Morton Bahr represented the AFL-CIO as part of the U.S. delegation accompanying President Clinton to Rabin's funeral in Jerusalem.

"It is a blow to all who have fought and prayed for peace," the National Committee for Labor Israel, headed by UNITE! President Jay Mazur, said in a statement. "He was a soldier who understood the pain of war and therefore became an advocate of peace."

RESOURCES

Not in Our Town is a half-hour television show produced by We Do The Work about the people of Billings, Mont., who joined together to stand up for their neighbors when they were under attack by white supremacists. The show highlights the important role of labor, religious groups, law enforcement and the media in fighting intolerance. The show airs Dec. 10-17 on PBS stations. Check your local TV listing for the station in your area.

CONFERENCES

The Federal Election Commission will sponsor two conferences on campaign finance law for corporations and labor unions. The **Conference for Corporations and Labor Organizations** will be held at the Madison Hotel in Washington Dec. 11-12, 1995. A **Regional Conference for Corporate/Labor PACs, House and Senate Candidates, and Political Party Committees** will be held at the Drake Hotel in Chicago, April 11-12, 1996. Registration is $165 for the D.C. conference and $150 for the regional conference in Chicago. Call 800/246-7277.

PUBLICATIONS

Restore the Floor. . . It's Time to Raise the Minimum Wage, published by the AFL-CIO Economic Research Department, spells out the lag in the minimum wage and describes who is paid the minimum wage and why an increase is socially desirable. Contact AFL-CIO Reproductions and Mailing Division, 815 16th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006; or call 202/637-5041.

Current Statistics on Professional Employees, published by the AFL-CIO Department for Professional Employees, presents vital statistics about the current labor force, selected occupations and earnings, and union membership. Copies are $4.00 each. Contact the DPE, 815 16th St. N.W., Suite 707, Washington, D.C. 20006.

VIDEOS

The following videos and audio cassette are available from the Labor Institute of Public Affairs, 815 16th St. N.W., Suite 206, Washington, D.C. 20006; or call 202/637-5334 or 800/242-8646.

Stand UP Theme Song is an audio cassette of music created and scored by labor musician John McCutcheon. The audio cassette (Catalog Code: CONV-701) is available for $5.

The **Highlights of the 1995 AFL-CIO Biennial Convention** includes the election, the lively floor debate, speeches by President Clinton and Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich and other highlights of the convention. The video (Catalog Code: CONV-801) is available for $10.

Convention Roll-ins cover a wide range of topics including Stand UP music video, organizing, solidarity, leading the fight for America's working families, full participation, community services, communications and global unity. The convention roll-in (Catalog Code: CONV-601) is available for $10.

The **Adopt-a-Family** video explains this vital program to international unions, locals, state and local AFL-CIOs and union members. This video (Catalog Code: LVBS-041) is available for $10. District of Columbia residents add 5.75 percent sales tax.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson, addressing a Medicare rally in front of the White House, will be a primary liaison with state and local bodies to enhance grass-roots activity.

Labor reseeds its grass roots

Chavez-Thompson plans state, local political ties

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

The AFL-CIO intends to revitalize state and local AFL-CIOs for the 1996 political elections, applying the adage, "All politics is local."

"The central labor councils and state federations are the front line of the labor movement," said AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson, who plans to be a primary liaison with those organizations. "They will be more pro-active, and the AFL-CIO will seek their suggestions and opinions."

That commitment by the new administration headed by President John J. Sweeney is one of the reasons state and local central bodies heavily backed the insurgents' campaign at the AFL-CIO convention.

"Solidarity is expressed first at the local level," said Stewart Acuff, president of the Atlanta AFL-CIO. "Strikes and political campaigns aren't won on Capitol Hill; they are won in the community where they occur. In Atlanta, we have proven that aggressiveness can be effective, and militancy and solidarity are still effective."

Chavez-Thompson said the AFL-CIO will restructure and support central labor councils with an eye toward political effectiveness. To facilitate communication, the federation is planning to develop an advisory committee of leaders from small, medium and large councils to aid in the consultation process, she said.

Sweeney also has called for a structural link of state and local AFL-CIOs to the Executive Council, with liaisons assuring that the views of the state and local organizations are considered by the council, and that federation programs are implemented in the field.

"It's about sharing information as well as getting information," said Chavez-Thompson. Some of the information exchange will begin at an annual conference where state and local leaders will participate in an educational forum as well as a planning session for political campaigns.

Labor's political effort depends on good communication, Chavez-Thompson said. "We failed in those communications in 1994. A good number of our members didn't vote for labor's candidates," she noted. "They needed to be well-informed to know why the labor-endorsed candidate is the best candidate."

In fact, "We can elect our own people," Chavez-Thompson said, pointing to Sweeney's plans to create a National Labor Political Training Center, which would not only train campaign managers and political activists, but also would develop candidates from within the labor movement.

The political training center would recruit and train candidates as well as develop community organizing support for labor's political agenda. The center also would provide such educational materials as polling, research and message development on behalf of labor candidates and issues.

Chavez-Thompson pointed to the Washington State AFL-CIO's 1995 Labor Campaign School as a prime example of what labor can do. The school, held Nov. 10-12, provided professional political training for trade unionists interested in running for office. Washington voters have elected three trade unionists to the state legislature.

"We noticed not many labor folks were running for office at the state and local levels, so we organized a 'plant the seed for the future campaign' that included the campaign school," said Diane McDaniel, COPE director for the Washington State AFL-CIO. "The interest was so high that we turned away 25 to 30 people because the hotel could only accommodate 100 people."

The plan has been to run the school during the off-year election, "but our members want us to do it every year," McDaniel said. The state federation is planning to conduct an advanced school in the spring for those who actually will be running for office in 1996.

Fourteen of the participants in the campaign school announced they would be launching their candidacies for state office next year. Others also expressed interest in running for local offices or becoming campaign managers.

"We have some good elected officials, but we also have to train our own," Chavez-Thompson said. "Protecting jobs and communicating the importance of 1996 as a political year are extremely important to our very existence. And the state federations and CLCs must be considered in setting up programs."

The first blip on the 1996 political radar scope is delegate selection for the political party conventions, which was the subject of a training session involving 37 state federation officials and COPE staff Nov. 13-15 at the Masters, Mates and Pilots training center in Linthicum, Md.

As a former vice president of the San Antonio AFL-CIO, Chavez-Thompson said, "I've heard the problems. We pooled things together because many times we didn't have the sort of resources we needed. With this new structure, we will have the opportunity to hear from our people on the front lines."

"Every state is different," said Indiana State AFL-CIO President Charles C. Deppert. "But when the issues are right, we can mobilize large groups to be involved in the political process. And the issues people care about are local."

Flexibility will be the rule, said Chavez-Thompson. "State and local central bodies know better than anyone else the pulse of their state or local community. We must listen to things they have already done."

AFL-CIO NEWS

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INSIDE



Jim Levitt/Impact Visuals

Some 2,000 striking Machinists and their supporters were joined in Everett, Wash., by AFL-CIO leaders at a rally for a fair contract at Boeing. **See story, Page 7.**

LEGISLATION

1 *Congress blamed in federal lockout*

10 *Minimum wage inaction draws fire*

UNION YES

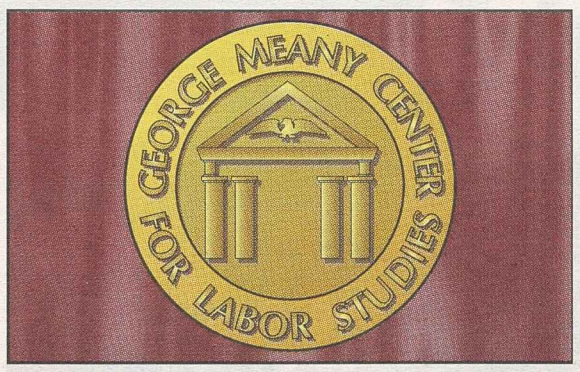
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The George Meany Center for Labor Studies plans regional programs for 1996. **See LABORITE, Pages 5-8.**

Workers building support for budget veto

By Mike Hall

The AFL-CIO is stoking a massive nationwide grassroots campaign to build support for a promised veto of the Republican budget that guts Medicare, Medicaid and student loan programs, and raises taxes on the working poor to pay for tax breaks for the rich.

The campaign includes direct mailings and follow-up phone calls, as well as radio and television advertising in selected congressional districts beginning the week of Dec. 4. In addition, state and local AFL-CIO leaders in those districts were holding news conferences and other events to dramatize the budget issues.

In letters to presidents of affiliated unions and state federations, AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney urged that workers get involved at the local level. "We need to voice strong support for the president's veto, keep the pressure on Congress and continue the political education of union members," he said.

"The truth about (House Speaker Newt) Gingrich's budget-cut-for-tax-giveaway trade is sinking in," he said. "Labor has led an increasingly successful effort to expose the attempt to shift government funds away from working family programs towards large corporations and the well-to-do."

A new poll commissioned by the AFL-CIO shows a large majority of Americans think President Clinton should reject any budget deal with the Republicans that would lower corporate tax breaks, cut Medicare and Medicaid, reduce federal support for education and student loans or allow employers to raid pension funds.

More than 1 million union members and retirees in 55 Republican congressional districts were sent a special mailing from the federation and received phone calls from their unions urging them to send the message to their lawmakers that the Republican budget bill should be scuttled.

Television and radio ads will run in 20 of the districts and unions will sponsor mass actions in those districts during the first two weeks of December.

The direct mailing asks the union members and retirees to use the AFL-CIO's toll-free hotline numbers, 1-800/96-AFLCIO for the Senate and 1-800/97-AFLCIO for the House, to urge their representatives to send a budget bill to President Clinton that is "fair to seniors, college students and working families and lets the rich fend for themselves."

It also urges them to mail postcards to Clinton asking

Continued on Page 3



Jim Levitt/Impact Visuals

The morning after Machinists overwhelmingly rejected a contract proposal by Boeing, some 1,500 turned out at 5:30 a.m. for picket duty at the company's Everett, Wash., plant. **See UNION NEWS, Page 9.**

Labor battles to save OSHA from new peril

Chavez-Thompson assails insidious Senate measure

By Colleen M. O'Neill

AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson blasted the latest legislative threat to worker health and safety in her first appearance before Congress.

Chavez-Thompson told the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee Nov. 29 that S. 1423 would "weaken OSHA enforcement and limit workers' rights, resulting in more workplace injuries, illnesses and deaths, and less safety and health protection for workers."

The measure was introduced Nov. 17 by Sen. Judd Gregg (R-N.H.) and is co-sponsored by the panel's chair, Sen. Nancy L. Kassebaum (R-Kan.).

In many respects, S. 1423 is similar to H.R. 1834, a measure introduced in the House in June by Rep. Cass Ballenger (R-N.C.) that labor has actively opposed. Among other things, the Senate legislation would:

- Make the Occupational Safety and Health Administration an adviser to employers rather than an enforcer of the law and a protector of workers.
- Exempt large numbers of employers from routine inspections and OSHA oversight, based simply upon a certification by a third party or the demonstration of a minimal level of safety and health performance.
- Take away the right of workers to have the government intervene to investigate serious workplace hazards.
- Give OSHA the discretion to issue warnings instead of citations for violations, even those resulting in deaths or serious injuries.
- Permit employers to set up and control employer-dominated committees that deal with safety and health matters and other issues legally subject to collective bargaining.

In a letter to the Senate after the hearing, the AFL-CIO noted that "although proponents of the bill have attempted to portray S. 1423 as a moderate proposal, it is not. This bill is very similar to legislation introduced in the House by Rep. Ballenger (H.R.

Continued on Page 3

Unions: Add justice to shopping list

Harry Wu helps kick off UFCW Wal-Mart drive

By Muriel H. Cooper

The holiday shopping season again is the backdrop in the fight for human and worker rights, as union and other activists are asking consumers across the country to take a stand for justice when they pick out their gifts.

Human rights activist Harry Wu kicked off a national Food and Commercial Workers handbilling campaign against Wal-Mart, one of the largest importers of goods made by Chinese forced labor. The UFCW campaign asks consumers not to buy their holiday gifts from the giant retailer.

UNITE!, meanwhile, pressed a consumer boycott against Kmart outlets in Greensboro, N.C., charging that the company engaged in discriminatory hiring practices. Kmart also was the target of leafleting in Detroit, where striking newspaper workers alerted consumers that the company was among those still advertising in the scab Detroit News and Free Press. **(See story, Page 9),** and in New England, where workers are asking shoppers "to question their patronage of the discount store in light of alleged anti-worker practices."

And labor, consumer and religious groups have been joined by the Clinton administration in the fight to end sweatshops in the garment industry, a campaign that is publicizing the names of retailers contributing to the effort.

Wu, speaking outside a Wal-Mart in suburban Seattle Dec. 2, said that during the season of peace and goodwill, it was hypocritical for Wal-Mart to buy Christmas products from China, which keeps millions of people in slave labor camps and murdered democratic activists in Tiananmen Square.

"Let there be no mistake about it. China persecutes Christians," he said, and yet "it is the largest manufacturer and exporter of Christmas products to the United States."

"It is up to us as individuals to act and one of the ways we can send everyone a message is not to buy Chinese products in stores like Wal-Mart," he said.

Wal-Mart advertises itself as selling American-

Continued on Page 11

ALPA, AFA gain organizing wins at American Eagle

The Air Line Pilots and the Flight Attendants scored major organizing victories by winning the right to represent workers at four American Eagle regional air carriers.

Among the 2,115 ballots returned, ALPA won nearly 70 percent, or 1,472 votes. Two unaffiliated unions, the Regional Airline Pilots Association and the Allied Pilots Association, picked up 311 and 232 votes, respectively. APA represents pilots at the parent American Airlines. There were 2,314 pilots eligible to vote.

The AFA, meanwhile, won the right to represent some 1,000 flight attendants employed by the four carriers.

With 1,003 attendants eligible to participate, AFA received 536 votes, with 200 going to the unaffiliated Association of Professional Flight Attendants and one write-in vote for the Transport Workers. AFA had represented workers at Simmons Airlines Inc., one of of the four regionals, while TWU was at Executive Airlines Inc. and Wings West Inc., and APFA was at Flagship Airlines Inc. APFA represents attendants at American Airlines.

The elections were held after the National Mediation Board ruled that the employees worked for a single employer for bargaining purposes.

"We are extremely pleased to welcome the American Eagle flight attendants to the AFA family," said AFA President Patricia Friend. "AFA represents the most regional carriers of any flight attendant union. Our experience in negotiating with these smaller carriers has provided our regional flight attendant members with industry-leading contracts."

ALPA, as the largest union representing pilots, also could claim the experience and bargaining power needed by pilots from the separate carriers, and could point to its experience representing pilots at Simmons.

The NMB ruled in August that labor issues at the four carriers were all controlled by AMR Eagle Inc., their parent company and a sister company of American Airlines, and that employees in the same class of work should have only one union representing them.

The election results were delayed by the shutdown of the federal government earlier in the month.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney tells CWA rally that labor will not give in to Bell Atlantic greed.

Labor serves notice on Bell Atlantic

By Colleen M. O'Neill

Thousands of Bell Atlantic workers put on hold by the company during contract negotiations were cheered by a message of labor solidarity and determination from AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney.

"We are here today to deliver a message to every woman and man in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia and the District of Columbia who believes in decency and dignity and justice," Sweeney said. "Our message is: We will not give in to corporate greed."

Some 6,000 union members gathered Nov. 18 at Baltimore's Camden Yards to offer support to the 37,000 members of the Communications Workers who have been working without a contract since Aug. 5. Negotiations have continued sporadically; the union is fighting Bell Atlantic's efforts to contract out work, deny members access to new jobs and cut retiree health care coverage.

Bell Atlantic has responded to the union's efforts to gain a fair contract by suspending 6,000 members for workplace protests. Workers were disciplined for calling in sick, wearing T-shirts to work with the message "Road Kill on the Information Superhighway" and for handing out fliers telling the public how to block "900" service.

The National Labor Relations Board has issued a complaint finding probable cause that the company violated the National Labor Relations Act in suspending the employees. Bell Atlantic has appealed and a hearing is scheduled for May.

The ratification by CWA members Nov. 22 of a three-year contract with US WEST Direct means every regional Bell operating company except Bell Atlantic has reached settlement with their work force. The relative ease with which the other RBOCs settled and the tremendous profits reported by Bell Atlantic in recent years highlight the company's intransigence.

"In 1994, Bell Atlantic earned profits of $1.4 billion on revenues of $13.8 billion," Sweeney said. "Over the past five years, Bell Atlantic revenues have grown 20 percent and profits have grown 30 percent. Last year, Bell Atlantic awarded stock options to CEO Ray Smith that will be worth $82 million in just 10 years!"

The rallies are part of a series of events CWA has engineered to keep the heat on Bell Atlantic. Nearly a quarter of a million union members in the company's service area have received letters asking them to drop such optional services as call waiting and call forwarding.

CWA announced Nov. 21 it would seek help from Bell Atlantic shareholders in gaining a fair contract. Three major shareholders already have sent letters to Smith expressing concern over the labor stalemate.

Steelworkers gain new support in Bridgestone campaign

By James B. Parks

The Steelworkers scored legal victories and ratcheted up the campaign against Bridgestone/Firestone as negotiations in the dispute resumed for the first time in more than six months.

Talks began Nov. 6, broke for the Thanksgiving holiday and resumed the week of Nov. 27 without progress. The last time both sides had sat down at the negotiating table was last May.

"We want an agreement that all our members can ratify at all the plants, and we want the permanent replacements out," said USWA spokesman Gary Hubbard.

The National Labor Relations Board's regional director in Indianapolis announced Nov. 21 he would issue an unfair labor practices complaint against Bridgestone/Firestone for hiring "permanent replacements" for strikers without giving advance notice and for refusing to reinstate striking employees.

This is the fourth complaint issued by an NLRB region against the company in the strike. The other complaints are for the firing of striking employees. In all, the union has filed some 40 unfair labor practice charges against the company.

The union's corporate campaign against the giant Japanese tire maker also received a boost when USWA President George Becker delivered a comprehensive report on the dispute to the White House. In a meeting with Harold Ickes, President Clinton's deputy chief of staff, Becker urged the president to do all he can to "secure justice for the Bridgestone/Firestone workers."

The Clinton administration has sharply criticized Bridgestone/Firestone for hiring 2,300 permanent replacements for the striking workers. Bridgestone/Firestone is one of the companies that could stand to lose millions in federal contracts under Clinton's executive order banning contracts with companies that use permanent replacements for strikers.

The campaign produced two more successes when both the Boston and the Niagara (N.Y.) Transportation authorities, under pressure from the unions, delayed votes on multimillion-dollar tire contracts with Bridgestone/Firestone.

On Nov. 17, the union opened up a new toll-free "unity" hotline to keep members and supporters informed about developments in the campaign for a new contract. The number is 1-800/79-UNITY.

In addition, the USWA has sent delegations to Japan and Europe to garner support from workers and to protest at company headquarters.

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Editor: Michael Byrne

Assistant Editors: David Kameras, Colleen M. O'Neill, James B. Parks

Staff Writers: Muriel H. Cooper, Mike Hall, Sharolyn A. Rosier

Graphics/Layout: Stan Hitt, Hindi M. Fracasse

AFL-CIO Press Secretary: Candice Johnson

AFL-CIO Headquarters: 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006
Telephone: (202) 637-5010 • CompuServe: 71112,53 • Internet: http://www.aflcio.org

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE AFL-CIO, LEADING THE FIGHT FOR AMERICA'S WORKING FAMILIES

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Budget fight rustles grass roots

Continued from Page 1

him to continue to stand firm for a fair budget for America's working families. In addition, they will be asked to send a return postcard to the AFL-CIO, so the federation can calculate the size of the response. The federation and some affiliated unions also will use phone banks to follow up with direct mail recipients.

A coordinator has been assigned to each of the 55 districts to help organize events keying on the budget proposals. Besides news conferences to announce labor's media blitz and to denounce the local House member who voted for the budget plan, other activities include distribution of the direct mail letter at worksites and shopping centers, meetings with media editorial boards and "phone-a-thons" at union halls, with senior citizen centers calling members of Congress continually.

The survey of both union and nonunion households, conducted by Peter D. Hart Research, shows that 86 percent of Americans say the Republican budget should be vetoed if it allows companies to raid pension funds; 81 percent would reject it for tax breaks to the wealthy; 73 percent say no to major cuts in Medicaid; 72 percent object to cuts in student loans; and 71 percent urge a veto if it requires higher Medicare premiums.

The poll found solid support for three key workplace issues. Two-thirds of those responding said the GOP budget plan should be vetoed if it weakens OSHA laws, while 59 percent would reject it if it sought to overturn Clinton's executive order banning federal contracts with companies that permanently replace striking workers, and 54 percent if it weakened unfair labor practice laws.

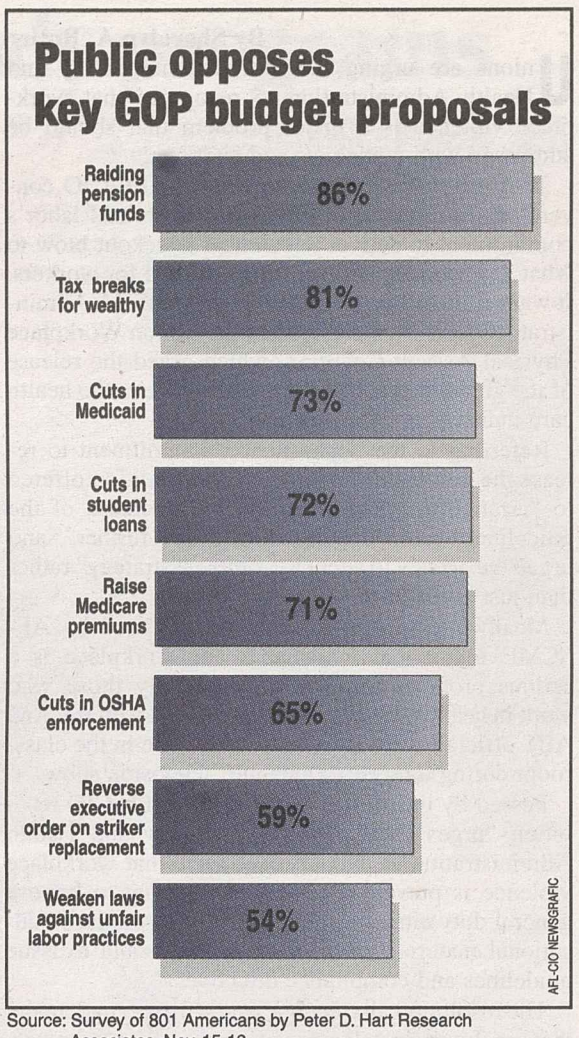
Both houses of Congress approved the conference report on the budget Nov. 17. The bill, which cuts Medicare by $270 billion and Medicaid by $170 billion to help pay for a $245 billion tax cut aimed at the rich, has yet to be sent to the White House for a promised veto.

A new Treasury Department study shows the bill would give the top 1 percent of families 17 percent of the $245 billion in tax breaks and nearly half of total benefits would go to families making more than $100,000 a year.

In sharp contrast, proposed reductions in the Earned Income Tax Credit would reduce the benefits of that program to 12.6 million low-income working families with 14.5 million children. It actually would raise taxes on 3.3 million working families with 6.8 million kids by an average of $508. The EITC is only available to families earning less than $28,000 a year.

On Nov. 15, the government technically ran out of money and the Republicans' refusal to compromise on a temporary spending bill forced a six-day government shutdown. That move cost taxpayers some $700 million, the Office of Management and Budget said.

Both sides agreed to a temporary spending bill that funds the government through Dec. 15. The Clinton administration and Republican congressional leaders have agreed to negotiate, but it is uncertain if they will reach agreement on a permanent spending measure, another temporary bill or face another government shutdown.



Source: Survey of 801 Americans by Peter D. Hart Research Associates, Nov. 15-19

Senate OSHA bill pushes business agenda over workers

Continued from Page 1

1834). Both bills represent extreme responses to perceived problems with the current statute."

Sens. Paul Wellstone (D-Minn.) and Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) weighed in with opposition to the legislation as written and the process by which it was being weighed.

"Since its enactment in 1970 — by any measure — OSHA has been a success," Harkin said. "So we should be careful in our efforts to reform."

He urged that Kassebaum schedule several more hearings and slow down consideration of the measure, saying that "OSHA is too important not to get its due."

Wellstone's remarks earned fiery rejoinders from Sens. Gregg and Dan Coats (R-Ind.), as he characterized the bill as nothing less than an effort to overturn a quarter-century of job safety and health history and "a half-century of history on Section 8(a)(2)" of the National Labor Relations Act dealing with company unions.

"I hope there will be more hearings on this matter," Wellstone said, "for if not, there'll be one big fight on the floor of the Senate."

That earned him a round of applause from the union members in attendance at the hearing, including members of AFSCME, AFT, Communications Workers, Food and Commercial Workers, Machinists, Mine Workers, Steelworkers, Teamsters, UAW and UNITE!.

Affiliated unions also joined in urging lawmakers to preserve and uphold federal job safety laws.

"With more than 6 million U.S. workers becoming victims of on-the-job injuries every year, Congress cannot and should not weaken or repeal the Occupational Safety and Health Act," said UNITE! President Jay Mazur in a statement.

"Just when OSHA is finally beginning to address the service-sector hazards, Congress wants to turn back the clock," Service Employees Secretary-Treasurer Richard W. Cordtz said in a statement. "Workers in the service sector are America's most underpaid and overworked — janitors and nurses' aides, for example. We condemn the Republicans for bowing to big business and we will vigorously oppose S. 1423."

Also testifying was OSHA Administrator Joseph A. Dear, who also expressed concern over S. 1423's weakened worker protections.

"I believe that in addition to making needed reforms to streamline and target OSHA activities, any serious effort at OSHA reform must address worker rights and protections that lie at the heart of the act," he said. "In that regard, S. 1423 is seriously unbalanced."



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

"This Congress has decided to respond to those in the business community who have raised objections to the OSHA law. In our view, business's interests, not workers' interests, are driving the legislative agenda."

— AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson

Chavez-Thompson returned to that point time and again, both in testimony and in response to questions from Kassebaum.

"This Congress has decided to respond to those in the business community who have raised objections to the OSHA law," she said. "In our view, business's interests, not workers' interests, are driving the legislative agenda.

"The provisions of S. 1423 go to the heart of the act — its provisions on enforcement and worker rights," Chavez-Thompson told the panel. "Workers in this country need *more* safety and health protection, not less. They need legislation that strengthens the OSHA law, not legislation that weakens enforcement and takes away their rights."

In particular, Chavez-Thompson told Kassebaum, labor was troubled by the possibility that, under S. 1423, OSHA would not necessarily conduct an on-site inspection in response to complaints. That garnered support from workers in attendance, who said the agency really needed to come out and see what's happening at the workplace.

Regarding the provision of the measure to reduce penalties, she told the committee that "without threats or severe penalties, it's human nature to budget less for safety. One life lost — or one child who loses a parent" is a terrible price to pay for changing the law.

Job violence struggle escalated

By Sharolyn A. Rosier

Unions are urging the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to recognize that workplace violence is a major problem that should be addressed with guidelines and citations.

That message was delivered in an AFL-CIO convention resolution that reaffirmed organized labor's commitment to deliver a technical knockout blow to what has become an increasing problem for workers. It was reiterated in a Nov. 14 letter to OSHA Administrator Joseph A. Dear by the Inter-Union Workplace Physical Assault Coalition, which urged the release of the guidelines for workplace violence in the health care industry.

Referring to the department's commitment to release the guidelines on Nov. 15, the coalition offered to "arrange a method by which the release of the guidelines would not be delayed any further," and urged the agency to adopt a "complete strategy" rather than just guidelines.

Meanwhile, a new report commissioned by AFSCME found that violence in the workplace is a serious problem for women, especially those who work in health care, education and social welfare. And AFT officials aired the issue of violence in the classroom during a recent "Donahue" television show.

Passed by unanimous consent, the AFL-CIO resolution "urges the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to publicly recognize that workplace violence is preventable, and to continue to impose general duty citations on employers, to produce educational materials, to hold conferences and to issue guidelines and compliance directives."

The resolution also encourages affiliates to demand that employers install safety devices in the workplace, increase staffing levels, develop training programs, institute counseling or debriefing programs for victims and to take whatever other actions necessary to protect workers.

The AFSCME report, "Hidden Violence Against Women at Work," shows that women have a higher rate of injury from nonfatal workplace assaults than men. Rates of nonfatal workplace assaults were highest among African-American women and government employees.

The report describes most workplace violence against women as "hidden violence" because it usually is not fatal, does not involve strangers or weapons and is not usually considered a crime by the victim. Instead, women are likely to be injured by unarmed offenders whom they know, according to the report.

"The violence that occurs in the workplace is senseless and could often be prevented if only the employer would take adequate precautions," said Catherine Collette, director of the Women's Rights Department at AFSCME. "These precautions need not be costly, but they do require a long-term commitment to safety."

> *"The violence that occurs in the workplace is senseless and could often be prevented if only the employer would take adequate precautions."*
>
> **—Catherine Collette**
> **AFSCME women's rights director**

According to the report, 260,000 women are victims of workplace violence each year, including 178,400 so-called simple assaults, 55,500 aggravated assaults, 17,400 robberies and 8,800 rapes. Workplace assaults serious enough to warrant time off from work injured 58 of every 100,000 working women in 1993, compared with 52 of every 100,000 working men.

The report, based largely on data from the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Justice Statistics, was prepared by the Center for Women in Government at the State University of New York. The report covers private- and public-sector workplaces.

Two-thirds of nonfatal attacks on women are committed by patients or residents in institutional settings, while husbands, boyfriends and ex-partners commit 15 percent of all workplace homicides against women, the report noted.

Nursing aides, orderlies and attendants had the largest number of nonfatal workplace assaults in 1993, followed by nurses, teachers and licensed practical nurses.

"This is one of the reasons a lot of good teachers are leaving the profession," AFT Vice President John Cole told the "Donahue" talk show during a recent episode that asked, "Are teachers at the mercy of their students?"

Cole said a recent Metropolitan Life poll in 1993 revealed that about one in 11 teachers had been assaulted at school and that about 25 percent of students reported they had been the victim of violent assault at school.

"We need to get back to an idea that there are standards for behavior, that if you violate these standards, things will happen," he said. "You won't just be given a 40-minute detention, but something bad will happen."

Nursing home safety gets new look

By Colleen M. O'Neill

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has won a review of an administrative law judge's dismissal of charges related to ergonomics hazards against a nursing home chain.

OSHA originally cited Beverly Enterprises Inc. for hazards involved in workers' lifting of patients at five nursing homes in Pennsylvania, and proposed nearly $35,000 in fines. Because OSHA lacks a standard dealing specifically with such repetitive motion injuries, the agency invoked its general duty clause to cite Beverly for requiring nursing assistants to lift patients in an unsafe manner.

The general duty clause, Section 5(a)(1) of the Occupational Safety and Health Act, requires employers to provide a place of employment free from recognized hazards likely to cause death or serious physical injury.

In its Nov. 1 petition to the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission, OSHA says ALJ John H. Frye disregarded testimony from nursing-home workers who experienced back and shoulder pain after lifting patients who could not support their own weight.

The Service Employees, which represents many Beverly employees, also filed a review petition. The panel agreed last month to hear the appeal.

Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich argued in the review petition that Frye required too high a burden of proof that the hazard existed, wrongly concluded that Reich lacked sufficient specificity in describing the hazard and rejected the opinions of the agency's expert witnesses.

"We have extensive documentation that manual lifting represents a serious hazard in many industries," OSHA Administrator Joseph A. Dear said. "The potential for back injuries among nursing personnel has been widely recognized throughout the nursing home industry for at least the last 20 years.

"While we are certain we can clearly demonstrate a recognized hazard," Dear said, "the questions raised in this case further point to the need for a specific standard that addresses the evaluation of ergonomic risks and points employers toward practical solutions."

SEIU pointed out in its petition that the Bureau of Labor Statistics classifies the nursing assistant job as a high-risk occupation.

"There is no mystery why this is so; the high injury rates stem largely from the fact that nursing assistants must repeatedly lift and transfer patients who often cannot bear any of their own weight, and who must be lifted and carried at awkward angles that subject the employee to severe physical stresses, especially on the back," the union's petition stated.

SEIU noted that Beverly has begun implementing ergonomics controls in their nursing homes, even while spending large sums of money fighting OSHA over the citations — money the union would rather see spent on a comprehensive program to reduce injuries, officials said.

Beverly Enterprises is one of the largest nursing home operators in the country, with more than 800 homes with approximately 90,000 beds.

After a ruling by the review commission, a dissatisfied party may appeal the case through the U.S. circuit court system.

Unanimous court decision upholds union 'salting'

By James B. Parks

In a major victory for organized labor, the U.S. Supreme Court unanimously ruled that federal labor law protects union members and staff from being denied jobs or being fired by companies they seek to organize.

The Nov. 28 ruling upholds the tactic of "salting," often used by construction unions, in which paid union staff seek employment at a job site with the intention of organizing a nonunion employer.

"This decision represents a much-needed victory not only for those of us in the electrical construction industry, but also for all workers who have seen their right to organize into unions badly eroded in recent years," said Electrical Workers President John J. Barry.

"Many employers seem to feel they can twist the law like a pretzel to keep their workers from forming unions, yet they scream foul when a union uses the law to the fullest to protect its right to organize," Barry said.

The tactic was used by IBEW Local 292 at a paper mill in International Falls, Minn. The company, Town & Country Electric, a Wisconsin electrical contractor, fired Malcolm Hansen, an IBEW organizer, allegedly for nonstop talking.

But the National Labor Relations Board ruled in December 1992 that Hansen was an "employee" under federal labor law and was entitled to the same work rules and protections against discrimination as other employees.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 8th Circuit overturned the ruling. In a brief filed on behalf of the local before the Supreme Court, the AFL-CIO argued that so long as a person performs work under the company's supervision in return for wages, he or she is an employee.

The idea advanced by the appeals court and management lawyers that being a paid union organizer breaches an employee's duty of loyalty to the employer "simply flies in the face" of the National Labor Relations Act, the AFL-CIO brief maintained. The whole purpose of the act was to protect the right of employees to form a union, and there is no incompatibility between being a loyal employee and a loyal union member, according to the brief.

The high court agreed. "Can a worker be a company's 'employee' . . . if, at the same time, a union pays that worker to help the union organize the company?" Justice Stephen G. Breyer wrote for the court. "We agree with the National Labor Relations Board that the answer is 'yes,' " he said.

"We hold only that the board's construction of the word 'employee' is lawful; that term does not exclude paid union organizers," Breyer wrote.

The high court also refused to review a lower court decision that it does not violate the federal Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act for a nonunion company to buy a unionized business and offer jobs to the employees at a lower pay rate.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit had ruled in IATSE vs. Compact Video that a cutback in wages and benefits because of the sale of the company is not covered in the WARN Act. The new owner has the same obligations under the act as the previous owner only in case of closure or mass layoff, the court said.

In other court cases:

- The Paperworkers, which represents 760 locked-out workers at A.E. Staley Manufacturing Co., filed a lawsuit in state court charging the company improperly received millions of dollars in tax breaks from the state of Illinois.

The suit claims Decatur, Ill.-based Staley accepted $3 million in tax breaks under the state's enterprise zone program in 1993 and 1994 when it was no longer eligible because of reduced employment levels. Last August, the state revoked Staley's utility tax exemption after the union proved the company no longer employed 1,000 workers, as required to qualify for the tax break. The UPIU members, formerly Allied Industrial Workers, have been locked out since June 27, 1993.

- The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 1st Circuit upheld an NLRB injunction against agricultural giant ConAgra Inc. The court ruled that the board's general counsel has a good chance of proving the company violated labor laws by refusing to disclose financial documents to the Congreso de Uniones Industriales de Puerto Rico during contract negotiations.

Meany center plans regional study programs

Organizing 'On Target'; master's degree offered

By Muriel H. Cooper

The George Meany Center for Labor Studies begins a new season with a new building, a new audio magazine focusing on organizing and the first full year of a new master's degree program.

The center also plans to supplement its Western Semester in California with a series of regional organizing and collective bargaining education sessions.

"We have to go where the people are," said Robert Pleasure, executive director of the Meany center. "By offering regional classes, we are able to reach members who want training but may not be able to travel to our Maryland campus. It also is the best way to assure diversity."

The center's effort to expand its programs beyond the campus in Silver Spring, Md., has been enormously successful with the Western Semester, Pleasure said. That program, now three years old, has helped to increase participation by people of color in the labor training programs.

The Western Semester, which will be held from July 14 to Aug. 9 at the Hyatt Rickeys Hotel in Palo Alto, is expected to include Arbitration, Labor Law in Construction, Contract Negotiations, Organizing Techniques I, Newswriting and Editing for Union Publications, Effective Speaking, One-on-One Coordinator Training, Occupational Safety and Health, and A Union Leader's Guide to Information Technology.

The regional programs, approved by the Meany center's board of trustees, will seek to use local AFL-CIOs as hubs for the multiunion education studies, Pleasure said. By coordinating the regional programs with the "Union Summer," massive organizing drives planned by AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney, the sessions are expected to help reach more activists and leaders.

"Organizing activity and education can be offered at the same time and be accessible to frontline organizers and union leadership," Pleasure said. "We need to develop a network and delivery system to these members at the local level and we need to provide practical, ongoing union action."

Working with affiliated unions, the center also will offer regional classes on the collective bargaining process, Pleasure said, to counter the "divide-and-conquer" game that many corporations are playing to stall or prevent master contract negotiations. "Our members need the education to deal with this," he said.

"Our programs will have an overall union-building impact," he said. "It is clear that education is regarded as a frontline activity that has value for membership and direct value for building the movement. Educating our members is part of the solution to the problems we face," he said.

In keeping with its theme of reaching members on their turf, the center is producing a new hourlong quarterly audio magazine, "On Target," that will focus on organizing. The show will be hosted by Valerie Ervin and David Alexander, two senior staff associates at the center.

The magazine, which will begin in the spring, is designed to reach the mobile audience of unionists — organizers, leaders and activists who may spend a lot of time in their cars.

The center will continue to offer its traditional classes from its campus in suburban Washington. Attendees will be able to choose from 44 programs, including the bachelor's degree program offered through Antioch College. The master's degree program in labor studies, which was initiated in July 1995, will be offered in conjunction with the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. It will focus on organizational development and union leadership.

The center continues to experiment with new programs, and is expanding those that have been particularly successful. For example, the Coordinated Organizing Membership Education and Training I and II (COMET) have become staples for building trades unions seeking to gain more member participation in organizing. The classes eventually may be tailored for the industrial and service sectors.

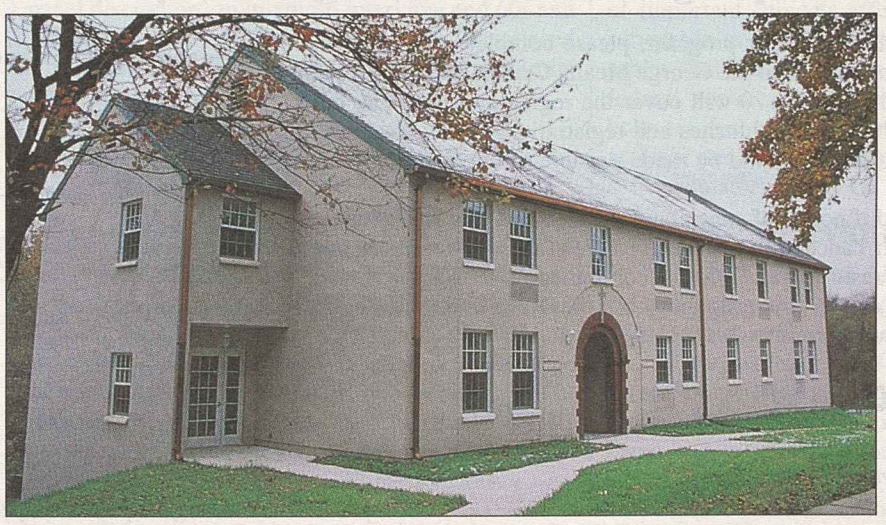
In keeping with the center's expansion program, a new residence hall and classroom building is opening. Barrett Hall, a mission-style building, holds 16 guest rooms and two classrooms. Eight of the rooms are accessible by the disabled.

The building is named in honor of the center's lead groundskeeper, Joseph Barrett, who maintained the beautiful surroundings on campus since it opened in 1974 until his sudden death late this year. The building will be dedicated by Sweeney on Dec. 14.

"The trees and fields that make our work so pleasant here at the center are more Joe Barrett's legacy to the labor movement than anyone else's," said Sweeney. "Anyone who attended classes in the last 21 years would likely have seen Joe Barrett caring for the entire campus in the same way he cared about everyone who came to work and studied here." Barrett was the unit representative of Service Employees Local 82.

For information about the center and its programs, or to subscribe to "On Target," contact the registration office at the George Meany Center for Labor Studies, 10000 New Hampshire Ave., Silver Spring, Md. 20903; phone 301/431-6400 or FAX 301/431-5411. Master's degree program information may be obtained from George Meany Center/University of Massachusetts-Amherst, Master's Program, Labor Relations and Research Center, 125 Draper Hall, Box 32020, University of Massachusetts-Amherst, Amherst, Mass. 01003-2020. Phone 413/545-2884 or FAX 413/545-0110.





Barrett Hall (left), which will be dedicated Dec. 14, is named after longtime groundskeeper Joseph Barrett, who helped to make the George Meany Center for Labor Studies campus in Silver Spring, Md., such a beautiful place to study.

Photos by Marianne Keffer Zweig
Page One Photography

Unions and the Legislative Process

Jan. 8-12

Union representatives are taught how to be more effective in the legislative process, particularly at the national level, focusing on how to develop grass-roots activities, how bills become laws (substantively and procedurally), how to identify and work with allies and other techniques of legislative advocacy. This course is recommended for union representatives with legislative responsibilities either for national unions, local unions or state and local federations. The program is co-sponsored by the AFL-CIO Department of Legislation.

Coordinator: **Donald Spatz**

ORGANIZING

Internal Organizing

Jan. 21-26

This institute is for those responsible for organizing and developing the support of existing members or for recruiting new members in established units. The course will rely heavily on developing long- and short-term organizing strategies.

Coordinator: **Valerie Ervin**

Organizing Techniques I

Feb. 11-16 and May 5-10

This is an introduction to basic organizing skills for new union organizers, and a refresher course for organizers in the private sector. An overview of the law for dealing with anti-union tactics will be discussed. Through role playing and discussion, participants will learn improved communications skills and their application to meetings, house calls and other one-on-one contacts.

Coordinator: **Valerie Ervin**

Exploring New Strategies for Organizing

June 2-7

Co-sponsored by the AFL-CIO Organizing Institute, this course will focus on strengthening an organizer's strategic thinking as well as sharpening the skills needed to win an organizing campaign and first contract. Case studies of recent campaigns will be used to discuss the decisions organizers must make daily in small and large industrial campaigns. Sessions on researching an employer, working with volunteer organizers and bypassing the National Labor Relations Board also will be included during the week. This course is for organizers who have completed Organizing I, or the Organizing Institute for Apprenticeship and/or who have extensive experience.

Coordinator: **Valerie Ervin**

Organizing in the Construction Industry

May 19-24

Building trades organizers can build their skills for local and regional campaigns through this institute. Participants focus on oral and written communications with members, unorganized workers, contractors and purchasers of construction services regional survey and targeting techniques, and on-site membership recruitment.

Coordinator: **Robert J. Pleasure**

Education Techniques in Construction Organizing (COMET I)

Feb. 26 - March 1 and June 17-21

Participants will be provided material and skills to deliver the new Construction Organizing Membership Education Training Program (COMET) developed for the Building and Construction Trades Department by Cornell University and the George Meany Center. COMET emphasizes membership awareness and enlists broad support for organizing activity.

Coordinators: **Robert Ozinga, Robert J. Pleasure**

Education Techniques in Construction Organizing (COMET II)

March 18-21 and May 13-16

COMET II prepares union activists to teach others to conduct worksite concerted activity and organizing. In COMET II, building trades unionists learn how to organize and practice the skills essential for motivating unrepresented co-workers, for confronting fear and challenging cynicism and for building confidence and power through group action. To enroll in COMET II, participants must have completed COMET I.

Coordinators: **Robert Ozinga, Robert J. Pleasure**

BARGAINING

Craft of Negotiating

April 21-26

Participants should have extensive experience in negotiating or have taken a basic contract negotiating institute at the George Meany Center before joining this program. The aim is to improve the skill of the participants in collective bargaining, grievance handling and union administration by looking at other negotiating situations. Negotiating theories are discussed and evaluated. This institute focuses on sharpening individual skills and developing tactics for all types of negotiations.

Coordinator: **Jeffrey MacDonald**

Negotiating and Writing Contract Language

June 9-14

This institute will discuss uniform principles of contract interpretation. Participants also will discuss the need to revise contract provisions to fit the changing workplace and work force and will be cautioned that management negotiators may come to the table with language proposals that substantially alter the traditional rights of unions and employees.

Coordinator: **Sharon Simon**

Using Computers for Contract Costing

March 10-15

The primary focus is on the use of off-the-shelf spreadsheet software in developing contract-costing capabilities, which will assist the negotiator in evaluating employer economic proposals and developing effective counterproposals. Although Lotus 1-2-3 is used in classes, the skills developed during the program apply to any standard spreadsheet program. Knowledge of computers is not necessary, but it is helpful to know standard contract-costing techniques.

Coordinator: **Jeffrey MacDonald**

Contract Negotiations in the Construction Industry

Feb. 25 - March 1

Union officers and staff responsible for negotiating labor agreements with construction industry employers are invited to this program, which is intended to improve the bargaining skills of union negotiators in an increasingly difficult and complex bargaining environment. Early sessions will focus on how to manage a negotiation from initial proposals through ratification. The special problems associated with employer association bargaining will be analyzed and discussed.

Coordinator: **Donald Spatz**

Contract Negotiations: Private Sector

Feb. 4-9

This institute is for full-time officers and staff who negotiate private-sector agreements. Early sessions focus on the role of the chief negotiator at different points in bargaining, including the preparation and design of initial proposals, recordkeeping, opening statements, economic bargaining and the ratification process. Bargaining-table tactics such as the timing and structure of counterproposals, avoiding bottlenecks, effective communications at the table and the use of mediation will be developed through case problems.

Coordinator: **Jeffrey MacDonald**

How to enroll in a program at the George Meany Center for Labor Studies

To enroll in a George Meany Center program, please complete and mail this application with payment of $670 to the George Meany Center; $600 will cover the single room-and-board bill and $70 will cover the registration fee. The cost for commuters is $110, which covers lunches and registration. Prices are subject to change without notice. Checks should be made payable to the George Meany Center for Labor Studies.

All fees will be refunded if notice of cancellation is received two weeks before the start of the program. If cancellation is received less than two weeks before, $480 will be refunded for residents and $40 for commuters.

For more information about any program, call the Registration Office at 301/431-6400, or FAX your request to 301/431-5411.

APPLICATION FORM

Application to register for labor studies
Send completed application form to:

Center Registrations
George Meany Center for Labor Studies
10000 New Hampshire Ave.
Silver Spring, Md. 20903

CHECK ONE

❑ Commuting to class ($110)*
❑ Single room @ $120 daily ($670)*
❑ Double room @ $90 daily per person ($520)*
with (name) _____

Please indicate any disability

_____

* Total cost for week including registration fee

Please print or type:

Please enroll me in (course) _____

Dates _____ Enclosed is $ _____

(Full payment is required with application)

Name: Mr./Ms. _____

Union Position _____

Sponsoring Union _____ Local Union Number _____

Business Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Business Phone ( ) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

To charge a payment, please complete the following:

❑ Visa ❑ Mastercard ❑ American Express

Account number_____ Expiration Date _____

Amount $_____ Authorized Signature _____

Your FAX_____

E-Mail Address_____

Other E-Mail Service_____

Your Internet Address_____

Send me information on: (please check)

❑ Western Semester ❑ College Degree Program ❑ Labor's Heritage

Advanced Bargaining Skills and Strategies

Jan. 21-26

Building on skills taught in organizing techniques and contract negotiations, this program looks at ways to increase bargaining power internally at the workplace and externally in the community and marketplace.

Coordinator: **Donald Spatz**

Negotiating for Employee Benefits

Jan. 14-19

Union staff and officers responsible for negotiating labor agreements in the private sector can update their knowledge and skills in negotiating employee benefits. Most of the program is devoted to the discussion of pensions and health insurance. The unique problems associated with bargaining over these programs will be explored, with the goal of developing improved bargaining strategies.

Coordinator: **Jeffrey MacDonald**

Certified Employee Benefit Specialist (CEBS) Program

Jan. 8-12 and June 3-7

The Certified Employee Benefit Specialist Program consists of 10 courses and corresponding examinations on such topics as health, life and other group benefit programs; Social Security, savings plans and other retirement arrangements; and the contemporary legal environment of employee benefit plans. The 10 courses cover the legal, financial and institutional framework in which employee benefit plans must operate.

Coordinator: **Jeffrey MacDonald**

Arbitration in the Federal Sector

Jan. 21-26

Mock cases will be presented before professional arbitrators with experience in the federal-sector. The cases will be videotaped and played back for analysis. This institute is for representatives in federal sector unions who have or will have arbitration as part of their responsibility.

Coordinator: **David G. Alexander**

Arbitration: Preparation and Presentation

Feb. 11-16 and June 2-7

Discussions will focus on what can be arbitrated and arbitrator selection. Since discipline and discharge cases cause more than half of all grievance arbitrations, special attention is paid to their investigation and to the rules arbitrators use in deciding them. Mock cases will be presented before professional arbitrators willing to share their knowledge.

Coordinator: **David G. Alexander**

Standards of Discipline and Discharge in Arbitration

March 10-15

Discipline and discharge standards and related issues of misconduct applied in grievance arbitration hearings are examined in this institute. Participants will hear from arbitrators and examine case studies that concentrate on the concept of just cause and the development of standards by arbitrators; investigation procedures and standards of proof in discipline and discharge cases; and discipline and discharge and evidentiary standards for alcohol-related, drug-related and off-duty misconduct. Participation is limited to those who attended the basic arbitration institute, or who are experienced in grievance arbitration.

Coordinator: **David G. Alexander**

Advanced Arbitration

April 21-26

Advanced training for grievance arbitration will be provided to help participants improve their techniques. Included will be exercises in the preparation and writing of post-hearing briefs, as well as discussions to assist participants in examining and cross-examining witnesses. The program is open to those who have attended the basic arbitration institute or who are experienced advocates in grievance arbitration.

Coordinator: **David G. Alexander**

COMMUNICATIONS

Effective Writing

April 28 - May 3

Private coaching by professional editors is a central part of this program. Participants complete writing exercises and revise their work each day. Writing formats include union correspondence, contract summaries, committee reports, position statements, speeches, leaflets, newsletter articles and public service announcements. Class size is limited to 14.

Coordinator: **Louise D. Walsh**



Photo by Wayne Buckle

Two grand dames of labor and political activism, Mildred Jeffrey and Esther Peterson, both in their 80s, were together recently at the Meany Center for a concert by labor troubadour Joe Glazer that benefited the oral history project of the Washington-area retired union officers and staff. Retiree associations meet regularly at the center, which is the site of the Great Labor Arts Exchange, scheduled for June 23-26 next year.

Newswriting and Editing for Union Publications

March 17-22

Union editors and their staff get professional coaching on what makes newsletters readable and credible, and in the process pick up ideas and resources from other participants. Daily classes focus on layout and design, newswriting, feature writing, labor laws for editors (libel and Landrum-Griffin), headline writing, photo editing, mailing tips and resources.

Coordinator: **Louise D. Walsh**

TV: The Cool Medium

Jan. 16-18

A three-day workshop coaches union leaders who are confronted occasionally by television reporters and television cameras. Participants will face video cameras in many exercises — a hostile confrontation, a panel discussion, an in-studio interview and 60- and 20-second addresses. These sessions may be tailored to individual unions if an affiliate wishes to train its staff in certain areas.

Coordinator: **Gene Morrill**

How to Make a Videotape

May 12-17

This workshop is for full-time local union staff who want to learn the basics of how to create short and inexpensive videotapes for their members and/or communities. Video scriptwriting and other elements of videotape production will be presented. Videotape specialists will lead this workshop. This is not a workshop on how to edit videotape. Officers and staff of state and local AFL-CIOs also are welcome to attend. Class size is limited to 20 participants.

Coordinator: **Louise D. Walsh**

A Union Leader's Guide To Information Technology

May 19-24

If you are ready to take the on-ramp to the Information Superhighway, but lack the horsepower to really get started, this course is for you. Using the AFL-CIO's LaborNET service on CompuServe, this institute will not only show you what is available in cyberspace, it will also introduce you to working with computer-based information services like CompuServe and the Internet. You must be using a computer now to be eligible for this course. Class size is limited to the first 18 who register.

Coordinators: **David G. Alexander, Jean Dearden, Chuck Hodell and Louise D. Walsh**

Effective Speaking

May 19-24

This workshop focuses on preparation for speaking, including selecting topics, researching, outlining and editing; and delivery of the message, with vocal variety, eye contact, audience analysis and an awareness of time and locale. Daily assignments include a variety of speaking situations. Exercises are videotaped and will emphasize listening skills, helping students become more attentive and responsive.

Coordinator: **Gene Morrill**

Teaching Techniques II

March 10-15

This institute is a weeklong follow-up to the basic teaching techniques for labor education courses and is jointly sponsored with the AFL-CIO Department of Education. The program will help participants further refine their teaching skills and introduce them to additional techniques. Several sessions will focus on how to develop teaching materials, such as role plays, questionnaires and case problems.

Coordinator: **Marjorie Rachlin**

LABOR RELATIONS

The Union Role in Participation Programs and in Reorganizing Work

Feb. 11-16

This course is designed to provide officers and staff with the knowledge needed to take on the major changes that are occurring in the way work is organized and the way jobs are structured. Participants will examine the many changes occurring in the workplace — including how work is being reorganized, employee and union input into decision making, changes in technology, new pay systems — and the impact these changes have on workers and their unions. The program will focus on developing a union action program and bargaining over change.

Coordinator: **Sharon Simon**

Employee Involvement and TQM: Developing a Union Strategy

April 28 - May 3

This course will look at how management plans for employee involvement, joint labor-management programs or total quality management programs affect union power, collective bargaining and job security. We will explore the options a union has and what steps the union can take to develop its own agenda for workplace change.

Coordinator: **Sharon Simon**

Labor Relations in the Federal Sector

May 13-17

This weeklong institute will provide an overview of important subjects affecting the role of staff and officers in unions representing workers in the federal sector. Subjects include collective bargaining in the federal sector; grievance handling and arbitration; how to deal with adverse and performance-based actions; and strengthening the union from within.

Coordinator: **David G. Alexander**

Effective Grievance Administration

March 31 - April 5

Participants will be helped to better use the grievance procedure to reach settlements. The course will use all the techniques of the arbitration course — careful preparation of evidence, case analysis, orderly presentation — applied in simulated cases. Participants will weigh the strong and weak points of the union's case as argued in the grievance hearing and will explore alternatives to traditional arbitration —in particular, grievance mediation. Participation is limited to graduates of the basic arbitration institute, or experienced advocates in grievance arbitration.

Coordinator: **David G. Alexander**

WORKER RIGHTS

Occupational Safety and Health

May 12-17

Union officials are assisted in responding effectively to the complex problems relating to chemical and physical hazards in the workplace, through a mix of problem-solving approaches: contract negotiations, grievance procedure and arbitration, the National Labor Relations Board, safety and health committees,

OSHA inspections, the OSHA appeals process, other government safety and health agencies, and mobilizing community support around health and safety issues.

Coordinator: **Donald Spatz**

Labor Law for Organizers

March 17-22

National and local staff with responsibility for and experience in private-sector organizing are invited to this program. The course emphasizes law as part of organizing strategy, the proper role of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) in a campaign (how to avoid having the law run the campaign), the ability to use the law as leverage and make strategic and tactical decisions. The program also will deal with alternative routes to obtaining recognition, including tactics to obtain voluntary recognition and the legal issues those tactics involve.

Coordinator: **To be announced**

Labor Law in the Construction Industry

March 10-15

The institute will cover union referral practices; union regulation of work and anti-trust laws; non-traditional economic pressures; corporate change in the employing unit, including the problems of double-breasted contractors, bankruptcies and mergers; union security, union dues and related legal issues; collective bargaining and contract enforcement in multiemployer bargaining units; and ERISA and job-creating investments.

Coordinator: **Robert J. Pleasure**

Service Contract Act: Collective Bargaining and Organizing

Feb. 20-23

Developed by the AFL-CIO Economic Research Department and offered cooperatively with the George Meany Center for Labor Studies and the AFL-CIO Department of Organization and Field Services, this program is for union officers and staff who either represent or organize workers covered by the Service Contract Act, a federal prevailing wage act that covers private-sector workers providing services to the federal government.

Coordinators: **Jeffrey MacDonald, John Zalusky**

Effective Union Action in Civil Rights

April 14-18

The AFL-CIO Civil Rights Department's annual conference is planned for unionists designated by their union to work in civil rights and women's rights. The conference is useful as well for all union officers and staff interested in this important subject.

Coordinators: **Valerie Ervin, Richard Womack**

LEADERSHIP

Dimensions of Leadership

Feb. 25 - March 1

This institute explores the nature and tasks of leadership that enable union leaders to best accomplish their group's purpose. In this program, participants will explore effective self-management, ethical dimensions of decision making, leadership styles, the nature and tasks of leadership, administrative responsibilities, conflict resolution and attributes of effective leaders. It is restricted to full-time union officers and professional staff who supervise others.

Coordinator: **Louise D. Walsh**

Union Issues for Working Women

Feb. 25 - March 1

Concerns for female workers are identified, while new approaches to tap the energy that millions of women bring to the trade union movement are developed. Learn how to defuse conflict, run a campaign, sharpen your leadership skills and enlist others to welcome diversity.

Coordinator: **Diana Linton**

New Staff Program

June 2-14

Individuals new to full-time union staff positions will find this two-week program useful. Those who have taken Organizing Techniques I and Contract Negotiations should not enroll in this program. The program has three basic goals: to develop personal skills needed to function effectively in the many different roles of a union staff member; to improve planning skills needed to manage a contract negotiation and to organize a campaign to revitalize a local union; and to provide insight into the structure, operation and goals of the U.S. labor movement.

Coordinators: **Donald Spatz, Jeffrey MacDonald and Diana Linton**

GEORGE MEANY CENTER CALENDAR

Institutes in **bold** type are open to full-time officers, representatives and staff members of all AFL-CIO affiliates. Those in light type are for the listed organizations only.

JANUARY 1996

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4-9
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African American Labor Center
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Dimensions of Leadership
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Union Issues for Working Women
25-March 1
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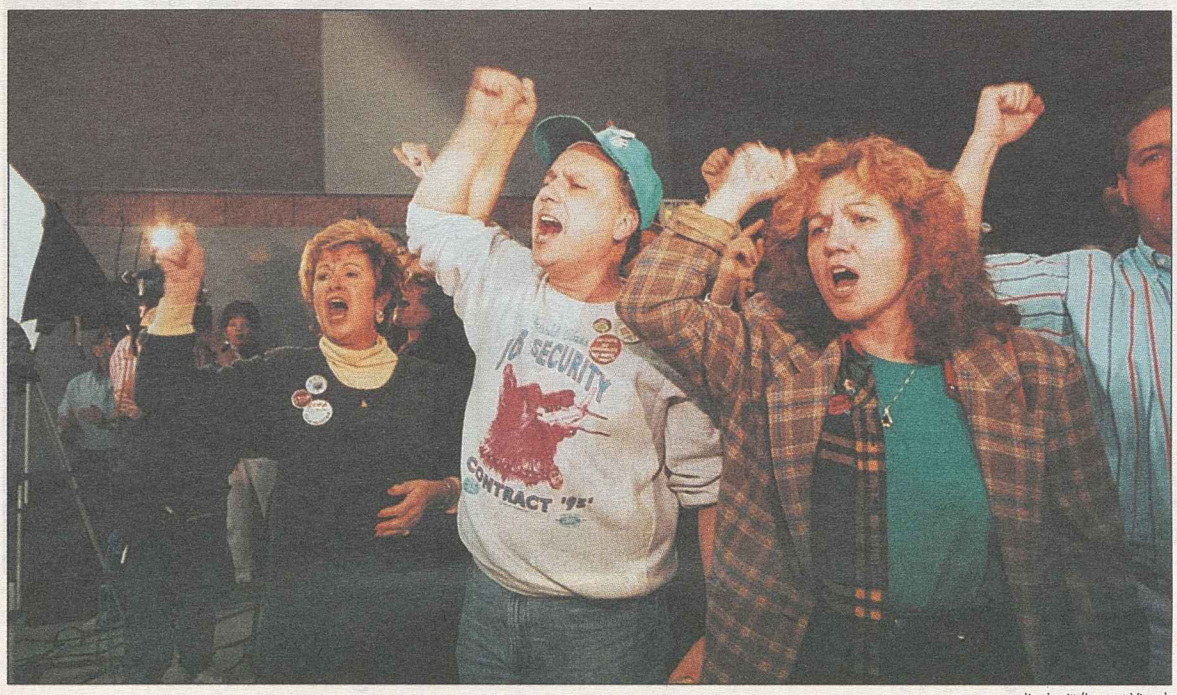
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Jim Levitt/Impact Visuals

Striking Machinists June Moen, David Clay and Ronnie Behnke chant "whatever it takes" after Boeing workers overwhelmingly rejected a proposed contract. They have been on strike for seven weeks.

Machinists firmly reject Boeing pact

By James B. Parks

The Machinists plan to vigorously pursue unfair labor practice charges against Boeing after members overwhelmingly rejected the company's latest contract offer.

"Our members have fought long and hard, and they're not going to start building airplanes again until Boeing improves that offer," said Bob Gregory, IAM's lead negotiator.

Whooping and chanting "No givebacks, no way" and "Stop Boeing Greed," members cheered when it was announced that 60.9 percent voted to reject the proposal.

The workers voted down the deal on the same day Boeing announced that five top executives, including CEO Frank Shrontz, would receive $2.5 million in bonuses because stock prices are rising.

Boeing posted profits of $856 million last year. "Yet here is Boeing insisting they have to cut our health care, and they can't afford to do anything more in the way of wages and benefits," Gregory said.

"We sent a good message to that company," said Bill Johnson, president of IAM District Lodge 751. "This was a lift for the people."

The strike has forced some Boeing customers, including employee-owned United Airlines, to cancel flights and juggle fleets due to late deliveries of aircraft. United announced the strike will force it to discontinue service on two international routes and to drop plans for another route.

The National Labor Relations Board on Nov. 6 issued an unfair labor practice complaint against Boeing for refusing to provide information to the union on subcontracting, other job security issues and health care proposals. The board also said the timing of the company's health care proposal, presented at the last minute in negotiations, was evidence that Boeing was not bargaining in good faith.

The union had expected the NLRB to issue an injunction against Boeing and to order the company to begin bargaining, but that decision was delayed by the shutdown of the federal government, said union spokesman Matt Bates.

The union filed another complaint with the NLRB Nov. 9 claiming the company illegally threatened striking workers with the loss of recall rights and provided misleading information on workers' rights to extended health insurance coverage. The complaint also claims Boeing failed to bargain on medical plan proposals.

The union said Boeing notified laid-off workers that if they did not report to work on or before Nov. 3, during the strike, they would not be allowed to return to work until Jan. 2, 1996. Another complaint filed Nov. 8 charges Boeing withheld vacation pay from workers who had scheduled vacations during the period the strike occurred.

"We are vigorously pursuing those charges," Gregory said. "Boeing must obey the law, in all respects, and bargain fairly and legally with the union."

Union negotiators had grudgingly recommended acceptance of the three-year contract, saying the pact would boost pensions, offer some protection against job losses through subcontracting and scale down health care cost increases.

The sticking point was a requirement that workers begin paying part of their health care insurance premiums to remain in the most popular health plan.

Some 32,500 Machinists in three states walked out Oct. 5 after rejecting the company's offer.

FedEx Pilots work to rule to gain accord

By David Kameras

Absolutely, positively determined to get a first contract, Air Line Pilots at Federal Express Corp. have begun implementing self-help activities against the carrier's recalcitrant management.

With a 30-day cooling-off period ended and talks broken off, ALPA is applying pressure just as the holiday shipping season begins in earnest.

"Despite the best efforts of the pilot negotiating committee to reach an agreement, FedEx management continued to insist that we accept regressive, concessionary proposals, while refusing to address the pay, work-rule and security issues that are critical to FedEx pilots," explained Joe DePete, chairman of the FedEx Master Executive Council.

The pilots are engaging in self-help "with great reluctance and great regret, but this is now the only means available to us to compel our management to return to the bargaining table, abandon its concessionary demands and at last fulfill its obligations to bargain in good faith," he said.

While union pilots are working to rule and refusing voluntary overtime work, the company has charged four pilots with deliberately delaying operations and is subjecting them to possible disciplinary action, a move the union calls intimidation through the use of "hostages."

FedEx is seeking to subcontract work generated by future growth, while retaining the right to use foreign nationals not falling under a collective bargaining agreement or U.S. labor laws, DePete said. The company also wants the right to unilaterally change, suspend or terminate the workers' retirement plan and benefits, and to impose unjustified work-rule changes.

FedEx already has implemented some of the rule changes unilaterally, and apparently is banking on a divide-and-conquer strategy that provides a pay increase while relying on non-ALPA pilots to provide the voluntary overtime work that is typically involved in up to 20 percent of its package deliveries.

"Pilots are proud of the role we've played in making our company the world's foremost overnight package delivery airline, and the proposals we've presented to our management are a fair exchange for our contributions," DePete said. "We cannot and will not accept FedEx management's outrageous demands."

Meanwhile, the National Mediation Board has ruled that all employees at FedEx are covered by the Railway Labor Act.

The board rejected arguments by the UAW, which is seeking to organize ground service workers, that workers who do not perform airline work fall instead under the National Labor Relations Act.

Detroit strikers have good reasons for holiday cheer

By James B. Parks

During the first days of the Christmas season, striking Detroit newspaper unions gave their bosses 1,000 people leafleting, hundreds of ads dropping, one lawsuit pending and a bevy of public officials speaking out against them.

Advertising was down 42 percent in the Detroit Free Press and Detroit News Sunday editions of Nov. 26, traditionally one of the biggest advertising sections of the year for newspapers, the striking unions reported.

"The holiday season is absolutely crucial to the newspaper business," said Al Young, president of Teamsters Local 2040, the Mailers Union. "If the News and Free Press can't convince advertisers to stay in the paper during this time of the year, they have a serious problem on their hands — much more serious than they're willing to admit," Young said.

The News and Free Press combined carried just 14 advertising inserts on the Sunday after Thanksgiving, with just 448 total pages of advertising. That is 42 percent to 44 below last year's total of 25 inserts and 772 pages of ads, the unions said.

More than 1,000 people, including Rep. John Conyers Jr. (D-Mich.), leafleted at stores still advertising in the scab papers throughout the Detroit area on the Friday after Thanksgiving, usually the busiest shopping day of the year.

Meanwhile, the striker-produced Sunday Journal sold out of some 250,000-300,000 copies for the second consecutive week Nov. 26. "This is more than a newspaper, it's a cause," said Karl Mantyla, a UAW spokesman who said he saw thousands of people standing in line to get the paper. "Some were plopping down $20 bills for a 60-cent newspaper."

AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson brought the message of labor solidarity to the strikers at a mass rally Dec. 3.

The 2,600 employees of the News and Free Press walked out July 13 after negotiations failed to produce a new agreement. Management and imported scabs from other papers are producing the newspapers, which are owned by media giants Knight-Ridder and Gannett. Hired union-busting security guards are delivering the papers, as well as harassing pickets.

A group of prominent Detroit-area citizens took up the strikers' cause and filed a federal class-action suit against the News, Free Press and their joint operating company, the Detroit Newspaper Agency, claiming they violated the terms of a special antitrust exemption they received in 1989.

The plaintiffs, who include former Mayor Coleman Young and City Council President Maryann Mahaffey, are seeking an end to the joint operating agreement, an injunction against price-fixing and triple damages to the victims, who are home subscribers since May 1992.

Meanwhile, police and fire officials in six suburban Detroit communities drew the wrath of Fire Fighters President Alfred K. Whitehead for proposing that fire fighters use high-pressure hoses on striking workers who block newspaper distribution centers.

"These proposals are an absolute outrage," Whitehead said. "These officials are asking fire fighters to break the law and they have no right to do so. You can't just go out and ask fire fighters to kill or injure someone with fire hoses. Fire fighters are not law enforcement officers and they are not in the business of crowd control. Our job is to fight fires and save lives, not injure people."

BARGAINING

UAW votes on Cat pact

UAW members were voting Dec. 2-3 on a new contract proposal from Caterpillar, but the union would not discuss the details of the deal until the vote was completed.

UAW Vice President Richard Shoemaker, who heads the union's Caterpillar Department, said the company presented its proposal at a meeting of the Caterpillar central bargaining committee Nov. 28. UAW President Stephen P. Yokich had promised to "promptly" take the proposal to the membership.

The union and the company have been involved quietly in negotiations for several weeks, the union said.

Some 13,000 UAW members in three states walked out in June 1994 over unfair labor practices by the giant equipment maker. The last contract expired in September 1991. The UAW ended a 163-day strike in 1992 and began an in-house campaign to win a better contract. Since the strike began, Caterpillar has used temporary workers and management to keep up production.

N.Y. Teachers gain

The United Federation of Teachers reached a tentative agreement with the New York City Board of Education that would provide salary increases of 11 percent over 59 months.

The contract, which was being voted on the week of Nov. 27, covers some 90,000 teachers, paraprofessionals, guidance counselors and other educational staff.

Under the tentative agreement, the top salary would rise to $70,000 for teachers with 25 years' experience and 30 hours of credit beyond a master's degree. A job security clause would ensure against layoffs through June 1998, the union said. In return, the UFT agreed to delay the first salary increases until the fall of 1997.

The job security clause "does a lot more than just keep our members working at a time when city, state and federal education cuts are threatening jobs," said UFT President Sandra Feldman.

IBT boosts part-timers

After months of effort, the Teamsters won a commitment from United Parcel Service to extend a stock offer to part-time employees with at least one year of seniority.

In August, UPS unilaterally terminated its thrift plan after 34 years and offered full-time employees a stock ownership plan. The IBT objected to the unilateral change in benefits and filed a complaint with the National Labor Relations Board seeking an injunction against the thrift plan termination and an order for UPS to bargain in good faith over the stock plan.

More than 100,000 workers participated in the plan, some 27,000 of whom are part-timers, the union said. A number of unresolved issues remain over the stock plan, including economic fairness, voting rights and the union's right to information about the stock plan and shareholders, IBT said.

Musicians in harmony

The executive board of Musicians Local 802 has approved new three-year contracts with the New York Pops, Brooklyn Philharmonic and Queens Symphony orchestras.

The contracts call for a wage increase of 11.8 percent, from $134.15 per performance to $150, over term. Hourly rehearsal rates will increase by 14.5 percent over the same period, from $26.20 to $30.

Health benefit contributions will be raised from $22 per performance to $23 over the life of the contracts, which also call for job security and the establishment of a tax-deferred annuity plan.

USWA, Rheem agree

Some 1,200 Steelworkers approved a new three-year contract at Rheem Manufacturing's plant in Fort Smith, Ark., that provides a 95-cents-an-hour wage increase, improves the pension plan and establishes a comprehensive health care plan.

Under the contract, the heating and air conditioning manufacturer will raise wages by 30 cents an hour in each of this year and 1996, and by 35 cents in 1997. The current average wage is $11.60 an hour.

The pension benefit will rise by $1 each year from the previous $18 per month per year of service to $21 in 1997. The new health plan calls for the company to pay 85 percent of costs. Employees' share of the premiums and of dental care premiums will increase slightly.



Raymond Crowell/Page One Photography

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Richard L. Trumka vows an aggressive labor response to bad-faith bargaining by Conrail during a rally at the National Mediation Board. At left is Mac Fleming, president of the Maintenance of Way Employees. Some BMWE members entered the building and were arrested.

BMWE presses board on Conrail

By David Kameras

Bearing slogans like "mediate, don't collaborate" and "NMB's stalling is appalling," hundreds of Maintenance of Way Employees rallied in front of the National Mediation Board's offices in Washington to demand that their Conrail Committee be released from a course of mediation that has gone on since March 31.

The 4,000 affected workers have been without a contract since Jan. 1, and the union maintains that Conrail is "purposely prolonging the process by refusing to bargain in good faith." The last, "bad" settlement was imposed by Congress in 1992 after nearly four years of mediation.

"Once again, we find ourselves in an apparently never-ending process of bad-faith bargaining by Conrail," said BMWE President Mac Fleming. "Once again, we find an agency of the U.S. government acting as a servant of Conrail management."

Fleming noted that since the last contract, a number of major world accomplishments, including the fall of the Berlin Wall, the end of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, the end of apartheid in South Africa, a lunar eclipse and the fighting of a major war, have taken place — but not a new contract.

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Richard L. Trumka told the demonstrators that their efforts would let the corporate interests know that labor stands together.

"Profits are up, productivity is up, but they don't want to share with us," he said. "They scream about how they want to be free to compete, while they operate as a monopoly. Railroads screamed to be deregulated, but they want their negotiation business regulated by the National Mediation Board."

Promising the full support of a "new, invigorated, biting and kicking AFL-CIO," Trumka declared to the enthusiastic gathering, "Conrail needs to have a good, old-fashioned ass-kicking, and we are about to give it to them."

The call for release from mediation was echoed by Richard W. Cordtz, secretary-treasurer of the Service Employees. "Today we stand in solidarity, and in solidarity we remain until you are victorious," he pledged.

Trumka gave the thumbs-up sign to dozens of union members who had entered the NMB's offices to press their case. After three hours in Board Chair Maggie Jacobsen's office, which they refused to leave without a written release, 33 BMWE members were removed by federal marshals and placed into custody. They were later released after paying a fine.

"We are outraged," said BMWE's Joel Myron. "We have done this before, and the Republicans didn't do this. We were going to sit there until they released us, and they released us to jail."

Under the Railway Labor Act, union workers cannot exercise their right to take direct action until after the end of mediation, followed by a 30-day cooling-off period. "The union needs the leverage of the right to strike in order to get Conrail to bargain in good faith," said BMWE Chairman Perry Geller.

Management is demanding a cut in real earnings over the life of the contract, a shift of greater health insurance costs to its workers and new work-rule concessions. At the same time, Conrail is enjoying some of its highest profits since a federal bail-out in 1976.

Recently, Conrail's offer to bargain was limited to a few hours in November, part of a day in December and sometime next year. Yet the NMB has yet to conclude that good-faith bargaining is absent, and has so far refused to release the union.

"We need the release so we can get on with the bargaining process," said Paul Swanson, BMWE's membership mobilization coordinator. "You can't bargain when there's no deadline." He described the union's tactics as "putting Conrail's feet to the fire."

In another industry development, tentative agreements have been reached between Metro-North Commuter Railroad, which is the target of selective strikes, and the Locomotive Engineers and the United Transportation Union.

Teamsters ratify carhaul agreement

Teamsters carhaulers voted overwhelmingly to approve a new master contract for some 12,000 drivers, dock workers and mechanics that features greater job security, higher pension and health contributions and reformed grievance procedures.

The 70 percent vote of support for the pact follows a 32-day selective strike the union waged against Ryder Automotive Operations, the nation's largest carhaul company, that was timed to coincide with the delivery schedule of the new models. That action came after nine months of fruitless bargaining during which Ryder, which had enjoyed record profits and given its CEO a 37.5 percent pay raise, was demanding concessions from its workers.

The strike blocked delivery of more than 500,000 cars and cost Ryder more than $30 million. Shippers reportedly still are plagued by a backlog of goods as a result of the strike, which ended in early October.

The new contract will result in average compensation packages for drivers reaching $57,000 by its fourth year, with the hourly rate for non-drivers increasing $1.35 over four years. Health and welfare and pension fund contributions will rise 45 cents an hour per employee this year, 55 cents next year and 55 cents in the third year, the largest increases ever negotiated, according to the union.

In addition, "innocent-until-proven-guilty" language means workers charged with misconduct will remain on the job until their cases are settled, and will have new rights within the grievance process. Health and safety protections also are enhanced.

"Our members deserve credit for winning a contract with better job security, pension and health benefits," said IBT President Ron Carey.

Ratification was delayed pending resolution of differences over a supplemental agreement covering the smaller "drive-away" unit of 1,000 workers.

— David Kameras

Holiday campaign focuses attention on sweatshops

Continued from Page 1

made goods. Yet, the largest retailer in the country also is one of the largest outlets of Chinese and other foreign-made merchandise, said UFCW spokesman Greg Denier.

"We know that 8 to 10 million people are in the Chinese prison system and forced to produce items for sales overseas," Denier said. "We also have confirmed through import records that Wal-Mart purchased goods from the Chinese Peoples' Liberation Army."

Wu, who spent 19 years in the Chinese prison system, or laogai, has made several trips back to his native land to expose companies that produce goods made from forced labor. On his latest trip, Wu, now a U.S. citizen, was imprisoned, convicted of stealing state secrets and kicked out of the country.

He told the AFL-CIO convention in October in New York that companies purchasing Chinese products made by forced labor not only cost U.S. workers their jobs, but also prop up a laogai system that "continues to destroy millions of people and create fear in billions more."

This fall, UFCW Local 1 challenged upstate New York shoppers to find as many foreign labels as they could in two Wal-Mart stores in an hour's time.

Almost 600 consumers participated and the winner found 40 different countries of origin. Shoppers matched two identical "Kathie Lee" brand vests, one made in the United States and the other in Mexico. The prices were identical.

"Mexican workers only make pennies an hour," said Sam Talarico, Local 1 president. "Who's pocketing the difference? Who's causing Americans to lose jobs? If they can make some in the U.S., why can't they make all of them here?"

The coalition fighting garment sweatshops will encourage consumers to ask retailers several questions: where they buy clothes; what they do to monitor sweatshop labor; whether they educate workers, contractors and subcontractors about fair labor standards; and whether they can ensure that their goods are not made in a sweatshop.

The coalition also will distribute the Department of Labor's new "Trendsetters" list of retailers and manufacturers committed to wiping out garment sweatshops.

"I believe that consumers will reward the national chains that are doing their very best to attack this problem," Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich said.

The DoL stepped up its efforts to stem abuses in the garment industry after investigators found almost 70 Thai nationals working under slave-labor conditions in California last summer.

UNITE! also is taking aim at the GAP, which manufactures 70 percent of its clothes in offshore sweatshops. The union earlier this year brought in two workers from El Salvador and Honduras to talk about their experiences in maquila sweatshops that sell to the GAP.

"Fifteen- and 16-year-old teenage women in El Salvador are forced to work 21 hour shifts and are paid 18 cents for every $20 GAP shirt they make," the union said in fliers distributed at a Dec. 1 rally outside the GAP store in New York City. "Stop exploiting women and children."

The North Carolina campaign against Kmart focuses on the 550 workers represented by UNITE! at the Greensboro distribution center. The union has joined with the Pulpit Forum, a group of African-American ministers, in charging the retailer with using race-based discriminatory pay and benefit practices.

The charges, filed with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, pointed to research showing top wages for Greensboro workers at $8.50 an hour, compared with $10.20 to $14 an hour at four similar centers around the country.

Meanwhile, the workers are still in negotiations for a first contract after voting for representation in 1993.

In a show of solidarity with Kmart workers, union members handed out fliers at Hampshire Mall in Massachusetts on Nov. 29. The unions took aim at the store's practice of not granting health benefits to part-time employees, while another discount chain, Caldors, offers benefits to members of UFCW.

"We are feeling pressure from Caldors because of competitive reasons . . . everyone pays the freight for Kmart employees," said Dick Courtney, an official of the Hampshire Franklin AFL-CIO.



Ray Crowell/Page One Photography

As part of an ongoing effort to bring peace and justice to Northern Ireland, AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney hosted a Washington reception for Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams during his recent visit to the United States. Among those attending were, from right, AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson, AFSCME President Gerald W. McEntee, Adams, Sweeney and Presidents John T. Joyce of the Bricklayers and Moe Biller of the Postal Workers. Sweeney, Joyce, McEntee and former AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue later joined President Clinton's delegation on his trip to Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Merger creates giant secretariat

By James B. Parks

The merger of two international trade federations into the world's largest trade secretariat displays the kind of international solidarity that is needed to fight greedy multinational corporations, the AFL-CIO's top leaders said.

Speaking at the founding congress of the International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Unions (ICEM), AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney praised the merger as a "win-win" situation because it provides for greater solidarity between two "militant, idealistic, creative" federations.

The ICEM will represent 20 million workers worldwide in industries including energy, chemicals, mining, pulp and paper, rubber, ceramics, glass and environmental services. It was formed by the merger of the Chemical, Energy and General Workers Federation (ICEF) and the Miners' International Federation (MIF). The merger is effective Jan. 1.

"From the day we signed up in our unions, we've known that our strength is in our unity," Sweeney said, citing the help both international federations gave the Mine Workers at Pittston in the coal strike and the Steelworkers at Ravenswood Aluminum.

In the last several years solidarity has taken on a new meaning, he said, as "the global economy means that political borders of nations count for little, and that economic power is even more concentrated in the hands of fewer multinational corporations. And as our adversaries work in global terms, so must we."

The merger sends a powerful message to those multinational companies and "repressive" governments "who are hell-bent to eradicate unions from the Earth," said AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Richard L. Trumka, who has been an MIF vice president. "You are proclaiming a new day when workers anywhere will be supported by workers everywhere."

"It is no longer sufficient to look in our own industries and our own country," Trumka said. Rather, unions must reach out and forge alliances with workers in other industries and other countries, he said.

Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich reminded the delegates that "labor rights are human rights." Governments cannot honor and respect human rights without according workers labor rights, he said.

Saying people are a nation's most important asset, Reich added that "countries that expect to benefit from free trade must have free unions and free citizens." Yet the United States has failed to ratify two International Labor Organization conventions that protect the right to organize and bargain collectively, Reich noted.

NEWSMAKERS

Character actor and activist **Richard Masur** was elected president of the Screen Actors Guild, replacing **Barry Gordon**, who resigned this summer in order to run for Congress. **Sumi Haru,** who served as acting president and is an AFL-CIO vice president, was re-elected as first vice president. Masur said his first priority is to push for a merger between SAG and the Television and Radio Artists.

Michael Moore, whose award-winning documentary "Roger and Me" put General Motors on the spot for abandoning Flint, Mich., has appealed to union members to write to the president of Fox Entertainment in support of "TV Nation," a topical news magazine that has focused on such key worker issues as corporate flight to Mexico and the Detroit newspaper strike. Letters should be sent to: John Matoian, president, Fox Entertainment, Building 88, Suite 336, 10201 W. Pico Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90035.

Alma Lee of Salem, Va., was re-elected for a second three-year term to lead the National Veterans Affairs Council of the Government Employees. Her responsibilities include the ongoing negotiations for a new master agreement with the Department of Veterans Affairs and the development of labor-management partnerships.

Lee is joined at the helm by **Walt Glockler** of Togas, Maine, as first executive vice president; **David Cox** of Salisbury, N.C., as second executive vice president; **Dave Long** of Johnson City, Tenn., as third executive vice president and **Dorothy Jefferson** of Columbia, S.C., as treasurer.

DEATHS

Florence Gompers MacKay, granddaughter of labor leader Samuel Gompers, died following a short illness. She was 103.

MacKay served in France as a field officer with the American Red Cross during World War I. She was a life member and national officer of the Women's Overseas Service League. MacKay worked closely with Stuart Kaufman, the advisor for archival affairs at the George Meany Center for Labor Studies, on his projected 12-volume book series, "The Making of a Union Leader."

She is survived by her children, Shirley MacKay Crockett and James Calvin MacKay, six grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Irvin King, a veteran labor photographer, died at his Virginia home after a long bout with cancer. He was 79.

King began his career with the UAW during Walter Reuther's presidency. Moving to Washington in 1972, King expanded his client list to include the AFL-CIO, Steelworkers, Machinists, Government Employees, Sheet Metal Workers and Transportation Communications Union.

Survivors include his wife, two sons and a stepdaughter.

— Compiled by Muriel H. Cooper

NAFTA partners add to U.S. trade deficit woes

By David Kameras

The merchandise trade deficit improved somewhat in September, moving from $15.6 billion to $13.8 billion. But it still far outpaces the level set by this time last year, and continues to deprive American workers of job opportunities.

"The impact of record-level trade deficits on American workers is far more serious than any consequences resulting from the more highly publicized federal budget deficit," said Mark Anderson, director of the AFL-CIO Task Force on Trade. "The trade deficit, not the budget deficit, is a major factor in unemployment, downward pressure on wages and increasingly skewed income distribution."

Trade with nations in the Pacific Rim continues to make up the bulk of the deficit, although the trade gap in goods with Japan shrank from $5.1 billion to $4.3 billion, and with China, from $3.9 billion to $3.6 billion, the Commerce Department reported.

But trade with the United States' partners in the North American Free Trade Agreement worsened significantly. The shortfall in goods with Canada went from $1.6 billion to $1.9 billion, and from $1.1 billion to $1.3 billion with Mexico.

The cumulative merchandise trade deficit with Mexico has reached $11.3 billion so far this year, compared with a $1.8 billion surplus last year.

Since congressional ratification of NAFTA two years ago, U.S. workers have seen their jobs move south of the border as their employers abandoned their communities to seek the lowest possible labor costs, which in Mexico adds up to a minimum wage of $2.35 a day. And the situation is getting worse.

A new report by the Institute for Policy Studies reveals that monthly NAFTA-related layoffs have doubled this year from those in 1994. Electronics and apparel, industries that disproportionately employ women, have been hardest hit, as have rural communities.

"NAFTA may be a winner for the CEOs of large mobile corporations, but the vast majority of people across North America feel like they are the losers under free trade," said Sarah Anderson, a co-author of the study.

"Our governments should abandon the agenda of spreading similar trade agreements to other countries," IPS said.

To help stem the hemorrhage of work caused by the trade agreement Sen. Byron L. Dorgan (D-N.D.) calls a "lemon," he and Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-Ohio) have introduced legislation setting conditions for continued U.S. participation.

"For too long, misrepresentations have been broadcast by the proponents of NAFTA about the impact of the agreement on the U.S. economy," Kaptur said. "From the proponents, we have heard a steady drumbeat of 'exports, exports, exports' without any recognition that we are importing more than we are exporting. Their method is the same as trying to balance your checkbook but counting only the deposits.

"The fact is that NAFTA has resulted in a deteriorating trade balance, significant American and Mexican job losses and declining real wages," she said.

"NAFTA promised a $12 billion trade surplus and delivered a $15 billion trade deficit," added Electronic Workers President William H. Bywater. "It promised 200,000 jobs and delivered 300,000 jobs lost. Our members have suffered enough. The economy has suffered enough."

Besides job losses, a recent federal proposal means NAFTA may also pose risks to highway safety.

The Interstate Commerce Commission has come up with a one-page licensing application for Mexican trucking companies that requires no proof that safety and liability requirements have been met before trucks start rolling across the border Dec. 18.

"The claim that highway safety will be protected under NAFTA has been a sham from day one," said Teamsters President Ron Carey, who has called for an ICC admission that a comprehensive highway safety program will not be in place in time. "Public safety on U.S. highways should not become yet another casualty of so-called free trade."



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Handcuffed together and blocking the entrance to the Washington office of two major Nigerian investors, Royal Dutch Shell and Chevron Corp., are (from left): AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson, TransAfrica President Randall Robinson, Acting Mine Workers President Cecil Roberts and Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers President Robert E. Wages. They were among 10 people later arrested.

Labor seeks end to Nigerian brutality

By James B. Parks

Organized labor is demanding that the U.S. government and companies doing business in Nigeria increase pressure on that renegade regime.

"We ask for the U.S. government to do all it can to end the (Nigerian dictator Gen. Sani) Abacha regime's reign of terror," AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney said in a letter to Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

"Executions must be stopped; political prisoners, including trade union leaders, must be freed; worker control over the Nigeria Labour Congress, the National Union of Petroleum and Gas Workers and Petroleum, Energy and Natural Gas Association of Nigeria must be restored," he wrote.

Sweeney called on the administration to increase pressure on Abacha by denying visas to Nigerians affiliated with the regime; pushing for Nigeria to be banned from the 1996 Olympics; expanding current moratoriums on aid; and freezing the assets of people related to the dictatorship.

In a mass demonstration Nov. 21, AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson was among eight union leaders and two others arrested for blocking the entrance to the Washington office of Royal Dutch Shell, one of Nigeria's major investors. Chevron Corp., another Nigerian investor, also has offices in the same building.

Before their arrest, three of the union leaders addressed a crowd of some 350 demonstrators, including delegates from the newly formed International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Unions (ICEM), the world's largest trade secretariat.

Chavez-Thompson called on Congress to pass sanctions against Nigeria, and urged the oil companies to "quit trading with a country that has killed its own people and denied our union brothers and sisters the right to belong to unions. When they have sought to exercise their right of protest, they are being slaughtered."

"Make no mistake about it, this is about human rights and trade union rights," said AFL-CIO Vice President Robert E. Wages of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers. "This is about whether or not global capital can exploit people and exploit the Earth. . . . We need to send a signal to Congress, to the president, to transnational corporations that we will not be silenced, that we will draw a line in the sand and say enough is enough."

Acting Mine Workers President Cecil Roberts said, "Every American can make a decision which side they are on: with killers in Nigeria or with people who are advocating progressive change in that country and have given their very life for freedom."

Others arrested along with Chavez-Thompson, Wages and Roberts included TransAfrica President Randall Robinson; Food and Commercial Workers Vice President Willie Baker; Metropolitan Washington AFL-CIO President Joslyn Williams; Teamsters Human Rights Director Claude Brown; Wil Duncan, executive director of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists; Folabi Olagbaju of the Service Employees staff; and a representative of the environmental group Greenpeace.

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UNION YES

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Harry Wu leads a rally against Wal-Mart in Auburn, Wash., part of union efforts to alert consumers to retailer abuses. **See story, Page 8.**

AFL-CIO NEWS

VOLUME 40, NUMBER 26 DECEMBER 18, 1995

Machinists in 'slam-dunk' win at Boeing

By James B. Parks

Solidarity paid off in a big way for Boeing Machinists, who ratified a new contract and ended a 69-day strike just three weeks after rejecting an earlier proposal.

"Our members won big across the board: from health insurance and job security to wages and pensions," said Bill Johnson, president of IAM District 751 in Seattle. "They should feel proud of what they've won after going toe-to-toe with one of the biggest corporations on Earth. This is a slam-dunk victory."

The new agreement, which was approved Dec. 13 on a vote of 18,604 to 2,779, expires Sept. 1, 1999. This deal is far superior to the one rejected Nov. 21, the union said. Under the contract, workers will receive a 10 percent bonus in the first year, twice what was previously proposed, followed by a 4.5 percent bonus in the second year and wage increases of 3 percent in each of the third and fourth years.

IAM President George Kourpias said the Boeing workers' "inspiring struggle . . . proves once again that unity and worker solidarity are powerful weapons against

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Workers move budget battle to grass roots

Ad campaign takes aim in congressional districts

By Mike Hall

Union members around the country rallied behind President Clinton's veto of a dangerous Republican budget bill that would have gutted Medicare, Medicaid, education and other key government programs for working families to pay for a tax cut aimed at the wealthy.

The AFL-CIO targeted 55 lawmakers who voted for the budget bill, coordinating grass-roots activity held in conjunction with television and radio commercials backing the veto. TV ads highlighting the member's vote for the budget were run in 22 districts, and radio ads were aired in several others. National TV ads also were aired.

Grass-roots coordinators from the federation and affiliated unions were assigned to all 55 districts. They helped organize dozens of press conferences to kick off labor's latest drive against the Republican budget.

Rallies, pickets and other events highlighted the horrors of the budget proposal and the glaring unfairness of it taking money from programs for working families to pay for a promised tax cut for the rich and big business.

In unveiling the TV and radio ads during a news conference Dec. 5, AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney said the federation was spending more than $1 million on the ads because "it was critical to hold members of Congress individually and jointly accountable for the choices they are making and to demand they vote with working families and against special interests."

Even if the campaign doesn't change any lawmakers' minds, Sweeney said, "we're educating our members and other citizens about the budget cuts and their impact."

The Republicans' budget priorities "insulted" working families, Sweeney said. If the bill had been signed and become law, working families would have been "deeply hurt by the attacks on education and other programs that have provided entry into the middle class for so many Americans," he said.

In Arkansas, union members leafleted Rep. Jay Dickey's office and held a news conference in Little Rock. In Santa Barbara, Calif., Marilyn Wollard, the

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Photo by David Bacon

AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney marches Dec. 8 in San Francisco with Service Employees members who were "permanently replaced" by Vencor-Hillhaven after a one-day strike last month. Sweeney also told the California Association of Public Hospitals that labor stands ready to work in partnership with health care providers to ensure quality care and to save jobs in the industry. **See story, Page 3.**

Promised changes are taking shape

Council, General Board to open year of activism

By Michael Byrne

The AFL-CIO Executive Council will meet in Washington Jan. 24 to consider a series of reports and recommendations by the new Sweeney administration for change in the labor movement.

The next day, Jan. 25, the AFL-CIO General Board will meet to consider endorsing a candidate for president of the United States. And then, on Jan. 26, principal officers of state federations will gather to discuss strategies for the important 1996 elections.

The three meetings kick off what promises to be a year of union activism, including a proposed "Union Summer" national organizing campaign and the mobilization for next year's crucial elections. AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney has promised an aggressive campaign to rebuild the labor movement through organizing and political activity, taking on multinational corporate malefactors directly and in solidarity with all workers and improving labor's public image.

Those themes are being explored by five transition work groups that Sweeney appointed in November. "These work groups will assist us in reviewing current activities and making proposals to the leadership on how best to integrate the new activities, as well as to identify issues where we will need your guidance," Sweeney said in a letter to the presidents of affiliated unions and state federations.

The work groups are:

Political Action. Coordinated by new Political Director Steve Rosenthal, this group is considering a number of proposals, including the creation of a new National Labor Political Training Center and an expanded role for state and local AFL-CIOs.

State federation officers have been invited to the Jan. 25 General Board meeting as observers. The AFL-CIO is working out procedures to establish permanent regional representation by the state federations on the General Board, as approved in a constitutional amendment at the 1995 convention.

Organizing. This group is reviewing a host of proposed structural changes at the AFL-CIO to boost organizing activity. Sweeney has announced his in-

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Perseverance, campaign help win first contract

By Muriel H. Cooper

After a two-and-a-half-year battle to win a first contract, UNITE! members at Chipman-Union Inc. in Union Point, Ga., ratified a three-year agreement that includes an increase in wages and benefits.

The settlement calls for a family prescription drug card, a $100 decrease in the health plan deductible, protections against discrimination in treatment, job bidding and wages, and increased vacations, holidays and employer contributions to the 401(k) program.

Workers also will receive a 10 percent wage increase during the next three years and an immediate $100 bonus. A joint labor-management committee will address health and safety concerns.

"It is very significant that we were able to negotiate basic union protections in a southern textile mill," said Bruce Raynor, executive vice president and southern regional director of UNITE! "It's some of the best language we've gotten in a textile contract."

The 550 workers at the plant are mostly African-American women who had complained they were subject to sexual harassment and piece-rate pay.

"This tremendous victory shows that workers in the South who stick together can win," Raynor said. "The Chipman-Union workers struggled long and hard over dignity on the job issues, such as a grievance and arbitration procedure, a fair job-bidding system, piece-rate and workload protections and improved bereavement leave."

The workers voted in 1993 to be represented by the Clothing and Textile Workers, which merged in July with the Ladies' Garment Workers to form UNITE!. Since that time, management stalled certification of the union and the start of negotiations.

"Management fought us all the way," said John Henry Thomas, a member of the union negotiating team. The National Labor Relations Board issued complaints against Chipman-Union for bad-faith bargaining and illegally firing several workers for engaging in lawful union activity.

The workers were reinstated this month and received $32,000 in back pay. "For two long years, we organized demonstrations, sticker campaigns, meetings and leafleted the plant gates," Thomas said.

"We contacted Chipman's customers, like adidas, and told them about the conditions in our factories."

"The entire union got involved in the campaign for Chipman-Union workers," noted UNITE! President Jay Mazur, who enlisted the support of German union leaders in adidas's home base.

Executive Vice President George Romney also organized a high-profile New York rally at the U.S. Tennis Open.

"Solidarity is not just the right thing to do," Mazur said, "it's the way to win."

Chipman-Union has an exclusive licensing agreement with adidas to market their brand of socks in the United States.

"I know that other workers in the South who labor under oppressive conditions will be inspired by the achievement of the Chipman-Union workers," said Raynor.

The Chipman-Union organizing win is one in a string that UNITE! has achieved in the South over the past three years, bringing the union advantage to more than 10,000 new workers.

Working groups focus on ways to rebuild labor

Executive Council will hear series of proposals

Continued from Page 1

tention to create an Organizing Department separate from Field Services, and has proposed increases in federation spending to spur organizing. The work group coordinator is Andy Stern, vice president and organizing director of the Service Employees.

Public Affairs. Sweeney has proposed a number of changes to "provide a forceful new voice for working families on national issues." This group also will be considering recommendations in a two-year study of AFL-CIO communications by the public relations firm of Greer, Margolis, Mitchell, Burns & Associates. Work is being coordinated by Denise Mitchell, Sweeney's assistant for public affairs.

Strategic Campaigns. Joseph Uehlein, executive assistant to the president of the AFL-CIO Industrial Union Department and a veteran of numerous union corporate campaigns, leads a group that will consider creating a Center for Strategic Campaigns and other assistance for affiliates locked in organizing and bargaining fights with multibillion-dollar corporate giants.

Union Education and Training. This group was added as an acknowledgement that organized labor cannot succeed without an informed union membership, said Bob Welsh, Sweeney's executive assistant. "It's clear that educating union members is key to everything we do," he said. The group is headed by Dorothy Shields, director of the AFL-CIO Education Department.

David Cohen, also of the Education Department, has been appointed to assist the groups coordinate and integrate their work.



Photo by Neal Sacharow

Unionists involved in a joint organizing project rally in front of a Food and Commercial Workers organizing target.

LAMAP unites organizing power

After they "talked the talk" of multiunion organizing during a meeting of the Los Angeles Manufacturing Action Project (LAMAP), nearly 150 unionists and community supporters "walked the walk" in a demonstration in support of Food and Commercial Workers trying to organize employees at Superior Markets in Los Angeles.

The Dec. 9 meeting was the second strategy session for an industry-by-industry organizing campaign being planned along a 21-mile corridor from Los Angeles to Long Beach. Participating unions include the UAW, Carpenters, UFCW, UNITE!, Longshoremen and Warehousemen, Machinists, Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers, Steelworkers and Teamsters.

"We are one united power of labor, community groups and academia" that knows there are 700,000 workers out there that need a union, said LAMAP project coordinator Peter B. Olney. "We know which industries are viable and will or can support unions and where we have leverage to mount industrywide agreements."

The L.A. corridor is one of the largest manufacturing zones in the United States, employing a high percentage of Latino and Asian workers, many of whom are women, in low-wage jobs.

"These workers are forced to take work home and sometimes they end up not getting paid. They are just getting hammered," said AFL-CIO Regional Director David Sickler, who has been helping to coordinate the project.

"They know they are very vulnerable unless they empower themselves. With community support, we can help them move into the mainstream by encouraging citizenship and voting," he said.

"We realize that we have to have total inclusion to make this successful," said Sickler. "No one can go it alone. That's why we are here today to support the UFCW in its organizing efforts at Superior."

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Editor: Michael Byrne

Assistant Editors: David Kameras, Colleen M. O'Neill, James B. Parks

Staff Writers: Muriel H. Cooper, Mike Hall, Sharolyn A. Rosier

Graphics/Layout: Stan Hitt, Hindi M. Fracasse

AFL-CIO Press Secretary: Candice Johnson

AFL-CIO Headquarters: 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006
Telephone: (202) 637-5010 • CompuServe: 71112,53 • Internet: http://www.aflcio.org

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE AFL-CIO, LEADING THE FIGHT FOR AMERICA'S WORKING FAMILIES

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LEGISLATION



Erasmo Mendieta/AFL-CIO

Illinois union members and residents of the Joliet Terrace Nursing Home, calling on Rep. Jerry Weller (R) to "say no to Medicare cuts," organize a phone bank to bring that message to constituents across the district. The action was part of labor's grass-roots campaign that saw activities in 55 congressional districts.

Workers amplify budget message

Continued from Page 1

Tri-Counties AFL-CIO executive secretary-treasurer held a news conference outside Rep. Andrea Seastrand's office.

Union members rallied and demonstrated against the budget outside the offices of Rep. Clay Shaw in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., and Rep. C.W. "Bill" Young in St. Petersburg, Fla.

In Joliet, Ill., union members joined residents and their relatives at a nursing home to protest the Medicare and Medicaid and retirees distributed leaflets through Rep. Jerry Weller's district.

In Rep. Robert Erlich's Maryland district, union members kicked off their campaign with a news conference and began a phone-bank effort staffed by 120 retirees to reach out to other working families.

UNITE! members, Electronic Workers District Council officials and the Passaic, N.J., AFL-CIO began a phone drive, bringing cellular phones to plants, work sites and shopping malls urging people to call Rep. Bill Martini's office. They also planned to hang banners calling for a fair budget along several highway overpasses.

More than 100 union members picketed and leafleted passersby outside House Budget Chairman John Kasich's Westerville, Ohio, office. Two days later in Cleveland, a coalition of union members, Jobs With Justice, Citizen Action, several religious groups and student organizations held a candlelight vigil outside a fund-raiser for Kasich and Ohio Reps. Martin Hoke and Steven LaTourette.

In Tennessee, members of the Electrical Workers, Carpenters and Laborers established phone banks to contact union members in Rep. Zach Wamp's district.

In Wyoming, pickets marched outside Rep. Barbara Cubin's offices in Casper, Rock Springs and Cheyenne. Leaflets were distributed at work sites, retirement homes, union halls and health facilities.

In addition to the grass-roots activity, AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson took the federation's fight against the budget cuts into the districts via a live satellite media tour coordinated by the Labor Institute of Public Affairs.

The tour was picked up by television stations in Denver; Chicago; Terre Haute, Ind.; Cincinnati and Dayton, Ohio; Erie, Pa.; Raleigh, N.C.; Wichita, Kan.; and Louisville, Ky.

The latest activities came on the heels of a direct-mail campaign that sent more than a million brochures into union and retiree households in the 55 Republican districts. The brochures urged recipients to use the AFL-CIO's toll-free congressional hotline (1-800/96-AFL-CIO for the Senate and 1-800/97-AFL-CIO for the House) to call their lawmakers and tell them to develop a budget that's "fair to seniors, college students and working families and let the rich fend for themselves."

A temporary government spending bill, passed before the Dec. 6 veto, was set to expire Dec. 15. While budget negotiators were meeting, it was unclear if Republican leaders will force another government shutdown by loading a new temporary spending bill with provisions that will trigger another veto.

CAPITOL DIGEST

The Republican-controlled House has launched another attack on two of the basic federal protections for workers: the 40-hour work week and overtime pay.

H.R. 2391 would allow employers to substitute compensatory time for the required time-and-half pay for hours worked past 40. While the bill's backers claim such an arrangement would be voluntary, "the realities of the workplace make it virtually impossible to establish truly voluntary employee compensatory time choices," AFL-CIO Legislative Director Peggy Taylor said in a letter to the House Economic and Educational Opportunities subcommittee on workforce protections.

"Many, if not most, unrepresented employees will not feel free to refuse a request by their boss to accept compensatory time in lieu of paid overtime, or to refuse a request to use (or not use) accrued compensatory time when it is convenient for the employer," she said.

"Permitting employers to 'pay' hourly employees overtime in time rather than in cash will, in many workplaces, significantly reduce the cost of overtime to the employer. The net effect will be to erode the 40-hour workweek standard and to lead many employers to demand overtime in lieu of hiring new employees," Taylor said.

Low-wage workers who most need overtime pay for subsistence could be particularly hurt by the bill. These unskilled employees are least likely to be able to insist upon premium pay rather than compensatory time off, she said.

Taylor warned that in some industries the use of compensatory time would result in abuse and severe economic dislocation. That would be particularly true in the garment, building service and construction industries where there are a lot of small, thinly capitalized transient employers.

"In these industries, accrued compensatory time may be worthless; when the cumulative value of the compensatory time bank gets too high, firms are likely to disappear and the employees will never collect anything for the overtime they worked," Taylor said.

The subcommittee has reported out the bill, which has not yet come before the full committee.

Elsewhere on Capitol Hill:

MARITIME — The House passed a bill, supported by the AFL-CIO, that could bolster the nation's military security and help the sagging fortunes of the U.S.-flag merchant fleet.

The legislation, H.R. 1350, would replace the current operating subsidy program for U.S. merchant ships with a new program for ship owners who allow their vessels to be used by the United States in times of emergency.

The Senate Commerce Committee approved a similar bill in August.

Health care, costs and jobs threatened by proposed cuts

By Colleen M. O'Neill

Medicare and Medicaid cuts proposed by the Republican-led Congress could add nearly 8 million people to the ranks of the uninsured and shift nearly $85 million in costs to the private sector, a new study reveals.

The cost to working people could be even more drastic than that found by the union-backed National Leadership Coalition on Health Care, AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney said. The squeezing of Medicare and Medicaid dollars means many health care workers will face restructuring — in some cases, right out of their jobs, he told the California Association of Public Hospitals in San Francisco.

"Our projections are that 1.7 million health care workers could lose their jobs, for instance, as a result of the proposed cuts in Medicare and Medicaid," Sweeney said Dec. 8 in his first major health policy address since taking over the federation's top office six weeks ago.

A study later released by AFSCME showed an even greater cost — 2.2 million jobs — if the Republican budget passes, with a severe impact on the health care industry.

"Many of those who keep their jobs will be faced with moving from hospitals into outpatient settings, with all the professional as well as personal stress that attends such uprooting," Sweeney said.

"Our unions know that we face drastic cuts in funding," he continued, "and we know that means we all face tough choices. But as I have said in city after city over the past year, we will not sit silently by seeing families ripped to their roots while many of the 'experts' who got us into this mess in the first place exclude us from the decisions affecting our future."

He called for labor-management partnerships as one solution to the crisis. "I can't think of a place where management needs labor as a partner more than in public health. We want serious consideration of alternatives to privatization and closures, such as the creation of public health authorities," he said.

The study by Lewin-VHI shows that the $434 billion in Medicare and Medicaid spending cutbacks proposed in the GOP budget — a combination of reductions in government payments to hospitals and other providers, increased beneficiary cost sharing, reduced coverage and expanded managed care enrollment — would leave some 7.8 million additional people without health coverage by 2002.

Those cuts would lead to working middle-class families and employers having to pick up the pieces and shoulder some $85 million in shifted additional health-related costs.

In this case, Lewin-VHI estimates the majority of the $85 billion — or nearly $67 billion — would be borne by workers in the form of foregone wages or higher cost-sharing for health care premiums.

Sweeney told the hospital association that "we cannot and must not allow the violent forces now battering our health care system to damage our mutual commitment to the mission of public health, which is to provide high quality medical care to everyone who needs it, no matter how poor they are, no matter how old, no matter how sick, no matter what color and no matter what their immigration status!"

He pledged labor's help in finding ways to maintain a strong role for government in assuring health care to all in an environment that favors market reform over government reform, and in building a public health system that works more efficiently "without hurting patients and workers."

Sweeney also spoke during a rally of embattled Hillhaven nursing home workers who were permanently replaced while on a one-day strike. The Service Employees have been negotiating with the company for more than a year for a contract.



Bill Burke/Page One Photgraphy

Building and Construction Trades Department President Robert A. Georgine testifies at a Senate OSHA hearing along with Deborah Berkowitz, right, safety director for the Food and Commercial Workers.

Measure curtails OSHA inspections

Job safety under threat of dangerous Senate bill

By Colleen M. O'Neill

Nearly three-fourths of all workplaces would never see a safety and health inspector if Republican senators have their way.

Dangerous legislation introduced last month in the Senate, S. 1423, automatically would exempt about 73 percent of the nation's employers from generally scheduled inspections by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Those inspections are used to keep tabs on the most hazardous industries.

Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) revealed the number of potentially exempt workplaces during a joint hearing of the Small Business and Labor and Human Resources committees.

"This bill would let even hazardous employers off the hook, denying the benefits of OSHA protections to some 40 million workers," AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney said in a statement. "These provisions destroy the foundation" of job safety laws.

"Inspections and strong enforcement have led to significant decreases in job fatalities and injuries in areas where OSHA has focused its resources," he said. "This progress would be reversed and more workers would be killed or injured."

The measure, introduced by Sen. Judd Gregg (R-N.H.) and co-sponsored by Labor and Human Resources Committee Chair Nancy L. Kassebaum (R-Kan.), would exempt many small businesses, farms and any employer with a lower-than-average injury rate, or one who has undergone a consultant's safety review.

"Although proponents of the bill have attempted to portray S. 1423 as a moderate proposal, it is not," wrote AFL-CIO Legislative Director Peggy Taylor in a letter to senators Dec. 4. "We believe that the bill is an extreme response to perceived problems with the current statute."

Labor's response to the potential threat engendered by the legislative measure — and the companion piece in the House, North Carolina Republican Rep. Cass Ballenger's H.R. 1834 — has been swift and decisive. Union members attended hearings Nov. 29 and Dec. 6, and held demonstrations in many home districts.

Unionists in Madison, Wis., rallied Dec. 4 in a continuing campaign against Rep. Scott Klug (R-Wis.) for his co-sponsorship of Ballenger's bill. That action took place during former Vice President Dan Quayle's appearance to help kick off Klug's re-election campaign.

Testifying during the Dec. 6 Senate hearing were AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades President Robert A. Georgine and Food and Commercial Workers Safety Director Deborah Berkowitz.

"I must emphasize that our focus should center on worker safety and health," Georgine said. "Though government efficiency and business competitiveness are important parts of this debate, they are not —nor should they be — controlling issues. As we consider each proposed reform, we must ask ourselves: 'How will this change affect the health, indeed the lives, of the American worker?' "

This bill, he said, "is nevertheless weighted against workers and detrimental to their rights."

He took issue with the tenets of the bill that would undermine genuine worker involvement in job safety and health, especially those provisions similar to the TEAM Act to circumvent the National Labor Relations Act, small employer exemptions, reduced penalties and warnings in lieu of citations.

Berkowitz noted the egregious impact the proposed legislation would have for workers in such high-hazard industries as meatpacking and poultry processing.

"There is no greater testament to the benefits of strong OSHA inspections than the track record of the many packing houses and poultry plants inspected by OSHA over the past 25 years," she told the committees.

"These are the industries where OSHA inspections are needed and are effective. S. 1423, however, will assure that these plants will rarely ever receive inspections.

"S. 1423 is an extreme measure that needlessly jeopardizes worker safety," Berkowitz testified. "It is falsely predicated on the assumption that both companies with truly stellar safety commitments and those with the worst safety records can be reformed with a hands-off policy of incentives."

Rules proposed to prevent 401(k) raiding

Prompted by investigations revealing that some employers are illegally abusing 401(k) contributions, Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich proposed regulations limiting the amount of time employers have to remit employee withholdings.

"While the vast majority of 401(k)s are safe, there are some problems out there and we're going to do all we can to make sure people have this money for retirement," said Reich. "It's their job to save for retirement and it's our job to protect those savings."

Under Reich's proposed regulation, employers would be required to deposit employee contributions according to the same schedule under which they transmit Social Security and federal income tax withholdings to the Internal Revenue Service.

The Labor Department's Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration has been conducting a nationwide crackdown against the misuse of 401(k) money by some employers. More than 100 cases have been closed, more than $3.5 million has been returned to workers and more than 300 other cases remain open.

Business urged to raise wages, save economy

Labor also campaigns for higher wage floor

By David Kameras

U.S. businesses must work to close the wide disparity of incomes in America if they want to prevent an economy where consumers can't afford to buy their products, AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney told business and other community leaders in New York.

"American workers and their families are suffering as they haven't suffered since the Great Depression," Sweeney told the Association for a Better New York. "And I'm convinced that business is going to suffer as well, if we don't close what is commonly called the 'wage gap' and remedy the excesses of our new 'winner-take-all' economy."

Sweeney vowed a rejuvenation of labor through organizing. "We're going to be stronger, and we are going to take it to greedy employers who've been picking our pockets and then trying to tell us we stupidly lost our wallets," he said.

"For American business, this is our message: If you choose to join us in building a bridge between management and labor, then together we can build a path to a new shared prosperity for American business and American workers. The choice is yours — and the benefits belong to you, to us and to all Americans," he said.

That message was delivered to Congress Dec. 15 by AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Richard L. Trumka, who declared that "America needs a raise" in testifying for a higher minimum wage before the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee.

"And nobody needs a raise more than the workers who do the most difficult, most dangerous and dirtiest jobs for poverty wages," he said. "They've earned it, their employers can afford it, and they are being denied it by a new economic order which puts profits first and people last."

Trumka pointed to the widening income gap among American households and the failure of the current economic recovery to narrow it. That gap "between the well-off and all of the rest of us is wreaking havoc on the lives of the backbone of this nation, our broad, working middle class."

Studies refute the GOP notion that raising the minimum wage would result in substantial job losses, and suggest that employers actually would invest more in their low-wage workers to help them develop more valuable skills, Trumka noted.

"The question is not whether this country and its business establishments can afford to pay decent wages; the real question is whether we can afford not to do so," he said.

Republicans have created a caricature of the low-wage worker as a teenager earning date money after school. But that image was rejected by AFL-CIO legislative representative Jane O'Grady during a forum hosted by Democratic members of the House Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee.

"Seven out of 10 people earning the minimum wage are 20 years or older," O'Grady said. "Today, women are 47 percent of the labor force, but they account for 61 percent of the workers who are paid the minimum wage or lower. Black and Hispanic workers make up 21 percent of the nation's work force, but they make up 30 percent of all workers earning $4.25 an hour or less.

"All these people need help from a higher minimum wage so they can move up into the mainstream of American life," she said.

Two polls taken this year indicated that 78 percent favor an increase in the minimum wage.

As prices increase, the buying power of earnings decreases, requiring the breadwinner for a family of four to make more than $15,703, or $7.55 an hour, to lift that family out of poverty, based on data analyzed by AFL-CIO economist Anne Draper. The minimum wage has been stuck at $4.25 an hour since 1991.

H.R. 940, introduced by House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.) and Rep. William Clay (D-Mo.), and S. 413, introduced by Senate Minority Leader Thomas A. Daschle (D-S.D.) and Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.), would raise the minimum wage by 90 cents over two years.

Boeing workers get job security, good health care

Continued from Page 1

those who use the global marketplace as cover to nibble away the underpinnings of our industrial democracy."

"This victory sends a message," he said. "It proclaims that working men and women, united in purpose, cannot be defeated. It's a wonderful Christmas message for workers everywhere."

The raises and cost-of-living adjustments will bring the average Boeing IAM wage to more than $23 an hour, the highest in the industry, the union said.

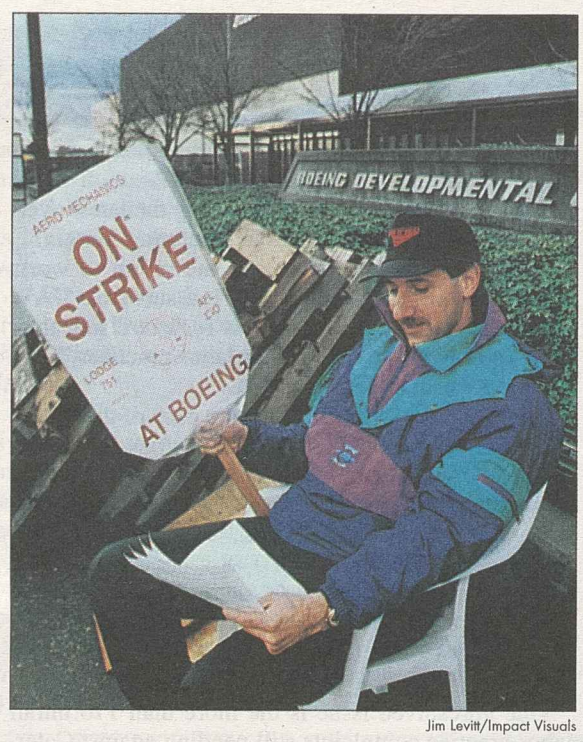
On the key issue of job security, the Machinists won language pledging that any worker affected by subcontracting will be reassigned or retrained for available work inside Boeing.

The union also beat back company efforts to expand the subcontracting of production and tooling work. The contract includes a provision that gives the union a direct role in decision making in the limitation of subcontracting, including restrictions on facilities maintenance work. The company must inform the union 90 days in advance of any intent to subcontract work, and the company must meet with the union to plan ways to retain the work at Boeing.

On health care, the employees will receive cash incentives to join or remain in a managed health care plan. There would be no employee payments for coverage unless increases in the Boeing medical plan costs exceed the national average. Then workers would pay no more than $10 a month for individuals and $30 for families beginning in 1998.

The health care issue had been very contentious. The National Labor Relations Board issued an unfair labor practice complaint Nov. 6 against Boeing for refusing to provide information to the union on subcontracting, other job security issues and health care proposals. The board also said the timing of the company's health care proposal, presented at the last minute in negotiations, was evidence that Boeing was not bargaining in good faith.

The workers overwhelmingly voted down a proposed contract Nov. 21, the same day Boeing announced that five top executives, including Chief Executive Officer Frank Shrontz, would receive $2.5 million in bonuses because stock prices are rising. One of the major sticking points was a requirement that workers begin paying part of their health care insurance premiums to remain in the most popular health plan.



Jim Levitt/Impact Visuals

Striking Boeing employee Dave Rostad examines the tentative contract agreement with Boeing while doing picket duty in Seattle.

Under the new agreement, pensions will increase by $5 per month per year of service, and there will be no changes in health care coverage for retirees.

Laid-off workers will be eligible for up to 26 weeks of income benefits and three months' health insurance coverage.

Some 32,500 Machinists in three states walked out Oct. 5 after overwhelmingly rejecting the company's contract offer. The locals on strike were located in the Puget Sound area of Washington state, Portland, Ore. and Wichita, Kan.

The strike caused some customers, including employee-owned United Airlines, to cancel flights and juggle fleets due to late deliveries of aircraft. United announced the strike had forced it to discontinue service on two international routes and to drop plans for another route.

Newspaper losses mount in Detroit

Strikers receive relief from generous comrades

The cost of trying to break the Detroit newspaper unions has ballooned to about $100 million with no end to the red ink in sight.

In a briefing for financial analysts, Knight-Ridder Cheif Executive Officer P. Anthony Ridder admitted the company would lose $50 million after taxes in the second half of this year because of the strike. That's an estimated $75 million before taxes, up from the $56 million Ridder predicted in November.

Through a joint operating agreement, Knight-Ridder, which owns the Free Press, shares equally losses and profits in Detroit with Gannett Corp., the owner of the News. That means the two will lose about $100 million after taxes since the strike began.

The losses stem from a 30 percent drop in advertising and 25 percent dip in circulation. The Sunday after Thanksgiving editions of the scab papers had 42 percent fewer inserts than last year on the busiest advertising day of the year.

"Knight-Ridder and Gannett have badly misjudged Detroit," said Teamsters President Ron Carey. "They have violated community standards, and the people of Detroit are rejecting their thuggish behavior."

AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson joined the strikers Dec. 3 in distributing their alternative newspaper, the Detroit Journal.

The paper, which continues to sell out 300,000 copies each edition, is constantly picking up new outlets, said Detroit Council of Newspaper Unions spokesman Roger Kerson. "People really want an alternative. They love it," he said.

The day before, Chavez-Thompson told a rally for the strikers that "every executive in America wants to see Gannett and Knight-Ridder get away with racking up enormous profits while giving its workers nothing."

"Every union-busting consultant in the country wants to see them get away with forcing its loyal workers out on the street in order to start a nationwide wave of 'union cleansing.' Every worker in America wants to help you continue to say, 'No, hell, no' to Gannett and Knight-Ridder," she said.

She praised the Journal, for which the federation provided $600,000 in seed money, as a "beacon of hope for every working man and woman in America."

The current DNA Striker Relief Fund has raised more than $200,000 since the strike began in October, primarily through a direct-mail campaign using some 60,000 Adopt-a-Family brochures developed by the AFL-CIO, according to Chris Marston of the federation's Community Services Department.

Strikers who need prescription drugs can take advantage of a United Way program that so far has purchased about $7,000 in prescription drugs for striking families through a special purchase agreement with Farmer Jack stores, he said.

A strike food bank distributes 900 bags of groceries each week, approximately 8.5 tons, Marston said. The striker relief fund purchases the food from a local food bank.

The AFL-CIO also trained a dozen strike counselors representing all the striking locals to provide advice and referrals to families on strike, he added.

Contributions to the fund should be mailed to DNA Striker Relief Fund, Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO, 2550 West Grand Blvd., Detroit, Mich. 48208.

— James B. Parks

World labor joins struggle at Bridgestone

By James B. Parks

The Steelworkers' campaign to gain a fair contract at Bridgestone/Firestone has spawned an intense global campaign that may be a bellwether of what international solidarity can accomplish.

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions adopted a resolution Dec. 6 condemning Bridgestone/Firestone management for its anti-worker policies in the United States. The resolution also called on workers worldwide to boycott Bridgestone/Firestone products.

"We welcome the support of the ICFTU and workers around the world in the fight for justice at Bridgestone/Firestone," USWA President George Becker said. "When big multinational corporations are abusing their workers, this deserves a multinational workers' response."

The ICFTU action came during a whirlwind tour of Europe by five "permanently replaced" Bridgestone/Firestone workers: Maria Schvanec of Macomb, Okla.; Michael K. O'Connor of Suffield, Ohio; Randy Gordon of Decatur, Ill.; Paul Gnade of Ankeny, Iowa; and Tamara Lee of Elwood, Ind. Gnade, Lee and Gordon had represented the workers during a similar trip to Tokyo.

While the workers were in Europe, Becker met Dec. 5 with Bridgestone/Firestone President Yoichiro Kaizaki in Tokyo. "Bridgestone is a good employer in Japan, and by the time we're finished, it's going to be a good employer in the United States, too," Becker said.

Becker also met with Japanese trade unionists to thank them for their support of the Bridgestone/Firestone workers.

The six-day European tour took the workers to Belgium, Spain and Italy. The solidarity and cooperation shown by the European workers were a "perfect example of the international trade union movement dealing with a multinational corporation," said DeWitt Walton of the USWA strategic campaign staff, who led the delegation.

In Brussels, Bridgestone/Firestone's European headquarters, the workers held a press conference with Bricklayers President John T. Joyce and Jim Catterson, research officer for the newly created Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers (ICEM).

With help from Le Centrale Generale, the Belgium trade union federation, the workers passed out 10,000 leaflets at the main train station. Although they were locked out of Bridgestone/Firestone's Belgium offices, they were able to enter the building through the basement and hold a meeting with a top company official.

In Spain, a meeting of 57 Bridgestone/Firestone shop stewards arranged by the Spanish labor federation UGT decided to demand the company negotiate a fair contract with the USWA, a demand repeated by the Italian trade unions, Walton said.

The international activities are being stepped up as negotiations on a new contract continue in Chicago. The talks started again Nov. 6 after a six-month lull, spurred in part by the intense efforts of the USWA to bring the dispute to national and international attention.

Religious Leaders for Justice at Bridgestone/Firestone, an ad hoc coalition of more than 400 leaders from 16 denominations and faith groups, signed advertisements that appeared Dec. 13 in the Chicago Tribune and Nashville Tennessean newspapers. The ads appealed to Bridgestone/Firestone to treat the workers fairly.

The USWA also is launching a holiday radio campaign in eight states, asking the public to support the strikers.

About 4,200 Bridgestone/Firestone employees in five states, formerly Rubber Workers before merging with the USWA, suspended their strike against the giant Japanese tire manufacturer May 22 and switched strategies in an effort to gain a new contract.

Approximately 1,000 of the workers who were "permanently replaced" still have not returned to work.

BARGAINING

Tyson drivers regain jobs

Teamsters drivers who have been on strike against Tyson Foods for six years will be offered jobs under a new settlement.

Tyson purchased its rival, Holly Farms, in 1989 and said it would merge that company's transportation unit with its own. Tyson offered jobs to the Holly Farms drivers, represented by the IBT, with new pay and working conditions. All but 47 of its 209 drivers accepted. But Tyson, the nation's largest poultry company, also withdrew recognition of the IBT, prompting the strike.

The National Labor Relations Board ruled Tyson's action violated federal labor laws, a decision upheld by the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals and the U.S. Supreme Court.

Under the settlement, about 100 drivers will get reinstatement offers from Tyson in "an important first step to ultimately negotiating a contract," said IBT spokesman Chip Roth.

7 units settle at NBC

Seven of 11 NABET/Communications Workers units at NBC have ratified contracts — but they will not be in effect until all union members have approved agreements.

The 2,200 members in the 11 units comprise a master agreement with the network, which had given union members a Dec. 15 deadline for ratification. But it is the union's position that the seven ratified contracts should be considered final and be set aside while work continues on the other four.

Those units accepting the five-year contract will receive wage increases of 3.5 percent effective Oct. 28, 1995, 3 percent on Oct. 26, 1996, 3.5 percent on Oct. 25, 1997, and 3 percent on Oct. 24, 1998.

The units rejecting the contract were Engineering; Couriers (Chicago); Air Conditioning, Plant Maintenance and Building Services (Los Angeles); and Newswriters (Los Angeles). About 90 percent of the 2,200 represented employees are engineers.

Teachers reject pact

Members of United Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 2 in New York City, rejected a proposed contract that would have frozen wages for two years.

The rejected pact called for a compounded salary increase of 11 percent over 59 months, but the wage increase would not begin until the third year. The teachers were angered, UFT President Sandra Feldman said, by Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani's proposal to raise salaries for himself and other city officials, announced just before the voting.

"It's bad enough that our teachers are forced to work under the most horrendous conditions in the state, with overcrowded and jam-packed classrooms, with school buildings that are literally falling apart, and often without even the most basic supplies," she said. "The mayor's proposal for pay raises for politicians and managers, while asking teachers to wait two years, was just plain insulting."

UFT units representing school secretaries and guidance counselors also rejected the pact, while paraprofessionals, school psychologists and social workers ratified it. The UFT represents some 68,000 teachers and another 22,000 educational employees.

Boilermakers sign contract

The Boilermakers ratified a new two-year contract with about 100 Southeastern contractors that increases wages and pension benefits. The pact covers some 6,500 workers in nine states: North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Arkansas.

Under the agreement, workers in all the states except Louisiana and Arkansas will receive an initial 60-cent-an-hour raise, with 35 cents going to wages and 25 cents to an annuity fund.

Workers in Louisiana and Arkansas, who previously were covered under the southcentral states contract, will receive raises scheduled in that pact, which has not yet expired. They will be integrated into the southeastern agreement over the next two years, the union said. The result will be standardized wages, benefits and work rules for workers in all nine states, said union Vice President Newton Jones.

Workers in all nine states will receive a 10-cent pension fund increase in October 1996, followed by a 35-cent wage increase in November 1996 for workers in the original seven states.

UAW ends strike at Caterpillar

Sweeney hails strikers for courage, solidarity

By James B. Parks

UAW members suspended their 17-month strike against Caterpillar while rejecting the latest overall contract proposal by an overwhelming margin.

"The recess of the strike and the return to work, which is expected to begin Dec. 11, assures that UAW members will not lose their jobs for exercising their legal right to strike over unfair labor practices," said union spokesman Karl Mantyla.

The company will determine the pace of the return. "While the union supports the earliest possible return of all the members, we will continue to provide assistance for the foreseeable future to those members who have not been called back," Mantyla said.

AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney praised the Caterpillar strikers' courage, saying they had set an example for workers all across the country "who are on the line with their own jobs and their own family security."

One unresolved issue is the more than 170 unfair labor practice complaints still pending against Caterpillar with the National Labor Relations Board, dating as far back as November 1992.

Despite the hardships imposed by the strike, the union survived, said striking worker Gary L. Romans of East Peoria, Ill. "What with a whirlwind of a p.r. campaign, a security force of mercenaries for hire and untold millions of dollars to spend, the corporate giant has been fought to a standstill," he said in a letter to the Peoria Journal Star.

"It was done with wood and fire barrels, hot soup and understanding families," Romans said. "It was done with picket lines and solidarity. And the union, despite all the overwhelming odds, was able to survive.

"A union of workers is very unique," he said. "They embrace everyone regardless of race, religion, sex or preference. And because of that fact, the union survived. And it will live and grow. Because this union of people knows no bounds."

UAW President Stephen P. Yokich and Vice President Richard Shoemaker, who heads the union's Caterpillar Department, announced the two developments Dec. 3, saying the "company's proposal was turned down by a large majority of members who voted."

At the same time, Yokich and Shoemaker said, "by an overwhelming majority, the UAW-Caterpillar Central Bargaining Committee had voted in support of recessing the strike . . . and UAW Caterpillar members are available immediately and unconditionally for return to work."

Some 14,000 UAW members walked out June 21, 1994, over unfair labor practices. The strike affected eight plants in Illinois, Pennsylvania and Colorado.

Pilots put FedEx in a holiday bind

By David Kameras

Santa Claus may be running a little late this year because of a tie-up over Memphis.

With a well-timed job action by the Air Line Pilots, Federal Express Corp. is hard-pressed to stick to its promise of guaranteed overnight delivery, as it scrambles to lease airplanes and crews to meet the holiday crunch.

Slowdowns and inexperienced rent-a-pilots are scaring off regular customers, and competitors lack the capacity to pick up the slack. ALPA has cited reports of canceled flights, light loads and planes arriving too late for the sorting process. Such large shippers as American Express and Price Waterhouse have reported pickup and delivery problems, with some packages ending up thousands of miles from their destination.

To help customers get the message, ALPA has run full-page ads in major newspapers with a photo depicting an empty cockpit and the headline, "It's 10:30 a.m. — Do you know where your package is?"

"If you did NOT receive your important FedEx packages on time this morning, blame FedEx management," the ad says. Although the pilots have tried for more than 18 months to get a contract, "FedEx management . . . continues to maintain a vehement anti-union stance that precludes an agreement — even insisting on concessions at a time of record profits."

"We pledge to you that we will resume our world-class service as quickly as we can achieve our goal: a fair package, delivered on time," the ad says.

Following the Thanksgiving weekend close of a 30-day cooling-off period, FedEx unilaterally imposed new rules that make it easier to hire outside crews, and is seeking to subcontract new work and weaken retirement benefits.

ALPA has called on pilots, both union and nonunion, to work to the rule and refuse voluntary overtime. But in classic union-busting fashion, the carrier has increased base pay, which the union says is negated by work-rule changes, as well as overtime compensation from time-and-a-half to double time after 15 hours, in an effort to weaken worker solidarity.

The company also has hinted that it may shift its business away from airborne service, which is the only domestic component presently unionized, toward surface transportation.

"If we can no longer count on all of our employees to maintain the promise of reliability to our customers, it is important that we know this now as we decide the direction in which we will take the company," FedEx founder and CEO Frederick Smith told employees in a Nov. 16 memo.

In other industry developments:

● Hundreds of mechanics fired by America West Airline for trying to form a union are the subject of a petition filed with the National Mediation Board seeking a new union election, as a counter to management's practice of "attacking workers after reaping record profits and collecting huge corporate salaries," Teamsters President Ron Carey said.

● ALPA has reached a tentative pact with Delta Air Lines that would allow the carrier to launch new low-cost service to compete with nonunion ValuJet and other bare-bones operators.

● The Flight Attendants have requested NMB assistance after eight months of fruitless negotiations for 325 attendants with Atlantic Southeast Airlines, a Delta Connection feeder with hubs in Atlanta and Dallas.

● The Flight Attendants ratified a first contract for 150 attendants with Business Express, a Delta Connection and Northwest Airlink feeder, with pay increases up to 57.4 percent over three years, maternity/paternity/adoption leave, written work rules and a grievance procedure.

IBT, N.Y. commuter rail reach pact

A major disruption to the travel plans of New York commuters narrowly was averted when management at Metro-North Commuter Railroad finally reached a tentative contract agreement with Teamsters Local 808.

Members who worked for the carrier's predecessors reportedly will get their final improved vacation package in 1998, and the remainder in 1999. The 700 track workers affected by the compact also eventually will get up to six personal days.

The settlement was reached after two limited strikes by Local 808, and brings to 11 the number of unions reaching agreements with the carrier, with six still bargaining.

The current negotiating round has resulted in a pattern of benefit improvements and a 10 percent wage increase over four years after a two-year wage freeze.

In other rail developments:

● The United Transportation Union has achieved a tentative national five-year pact with seven major carriers, including Burlington Northern Santa Fe, Chicago and North Western, Conrail, CSX, Kansas City Southern, Norfolk Southern and Union Pacific. The deal follows one UTU reached separately with the Illinois Central Railroad.

● Maintenance of Way Employees struck Conrail in an effort to keep jobs on a number of branch lines in central Pennsylvania the carrier wants to sell.

● By a lopsided 406-4 vote, the House passed an Amtrak reform bill that would lift current restrictions on negotiating certain contracting and severance issues.

— David Kameras

Slowing economy further dims jobs prospects

By David Kameras

The long and sustained economic recovery — which began in March 1991 — has not been strong enough to put 13 million people back to work.

In addition to the 7.4 million officially unemployed in November, 1.5 million workers wanted work but couldn't find it and 4.4 million workers wanted full-time jobs but could only find part-time work, for a total of 13.3 million affected by total or partial unemployment, AFL-CIO economist Frank Parente noted.

The Federal Reserve Board revealed that economic growth has slowed in Cleveland and New York, and manufacturing growth has moderated in Chicago. "Retailers in several districts reported heavy discounting for the holiday season," the Fed said, despite this being their busiest time of the year. The increase in unemployment from 5.5 percent to 5.6 percent provides further evidence that the economy is slowing down.

Manufacturing employment fell by 32,000, bringing job losses to more than a quarter of a million since March.

Tens of thousands of workers have been the victims of corporate downsizing, restructuring, re-engineering and all the other management euphemisms for putting workers out on the street. Most recently:

- Bethlehem Steel Corp. put out the fires in the last remaining blast furnace in its flagship plant in Bethlehem, Pa., sending 1,800 workers out to look for work in a town that offers few other job opportunities.
- A General Motors plant in southeast Baltimore is laying off some 80 assembly workers early next year.
- Fleer Corp., the company that brings you sports trading cards and Double Bubble gum, is giving 90 Philadelphia workers pink slips to chew on come January.
- Keebler Co. is selling its salty-snack division to a bunch of investors, resulting in the shutdown of union plants in Pennsylvania and Texas, including one acquired two years ago with low- and zero-interest government loans.
- Challenger, Gray and Christmas Inc., a Chicago outplacement firm, reported 41,293 layoffs in November, including 3M (5,000), Edison Brothers Stores (3,600), Sprint Corp. (1,600), Kmart (649) and Chevron (130). For the previous month, the firm reported 41,335 layoffs, including Allied Signal Inc. (3,100), Commonwealth Edison (3,000), CoreStates Financial Corp. (2,000), Cummins Engine Co. (2,000) and Fruit of the Loom Inc. (3,200).

Of 11 large states, unemployment rose in California (7.8 percent to 8.8 percent), Illinois (4.8 percent to 5 percent), Michigan (4.4 percent to 5 percent), New Jersey (5.8 percent to 6.1 percent), North Carolina (3.9 percent to 4.2 percent), Ohio (4.7 percent to 5.8 percent) and Pennsylvania (5.1 percent to 6.3 percent). It dropped in Florida (6.7 percent to 6.3 percent), Massachusetts (5.3 percent to 5.1 percent), New York (6.3 percent to 6 percent) and Texas (6.2 percent to 6 percent).

In one bit of good news, the Senate Judiciary subcommittee on immigration approved a measure to bar U.S. employers from replacing American workers with foreign temporary workers. Employers could still hire foreigners after paying into a fund for training U.S. workers if their American counterparts are unavailable.

"This bill will protect the U.S. workers who already have the skills and a good job, and help other U.S. workers to obtain the skills they need to get a good job," said Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich.



Bill Burke/Page One Photography

Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich listens as Beverly Johnson of the Office and Professional Employees Models Guild urges shoppers at a mall in Northern Virginia to avoid buying holiday gifts from retailers who use sweatshops to produce their goods. Reich announced a list of 31 "Trendsetter" retailers and manufacturers that are taking responsibility for monitoring work practices of contractors who make garments for them. Unions, meanwhile, were engaged in other consumer information campaigns. **See story, Page 8.**

NEWSMAKERS

President Clinton announced that he will nominate former AFL-CIO President **Lane Kirkland** to serve as an alternate representative to the 50th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. Kirkland, who retired from the presidency of the federation after 16 years in office, is one of three people nominated by Clinton.

Secretary of Labor **Robert B. Reich** applauded the AFL-CIO on Dec. 5, the 40th anniversary of the merger between the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations. "We salute the AFL-CIO's creative capabilities that have served it so well during this long partnership," Reich said. "And, with the baton recently passed to a dynamic new leadership team, we wish the organization well as it continues its efforts to improve the lives of American workers as we move toward the 21st century."

Richard W. Cordtz was elected president of the Service Employees by the union's executive board Dec. 12. Cordtz, who was secretary-treasurer, replaces **John J. Sweeney**, who was elected president of the AFL-CIO in October. **Betty Bednarczyk**, a vice president from Minneapolis, was elected to succeed Cordtz as secretary-treasurer. All officers will be up for election at the union's April convention.

Cecil E. Roberts, acting president of the Mine Workers, appointed **Jerry D. Jones** and **Carlo Tarley** to fill vacancies in the union's top offices. Roberts, who became acting president of the union after the election of **Richard L. Trumka** as secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO, will be inaugurated as president Dec. 22 in Charleston, W.Va., along with Jones, who moves from secretary-treasurer to vice president, and Tarley, an executive board member who becomes secretary-treasurer.

Don A. Turner, 54, was elected president and **Dennis Gannon**, 40, was named acting secretary-treasurer of the Chicago AFL-CIO. Turner will fill the unexpired term of **Michael Bruton**, who died in November of asbestos-related cancer. Gannon has declared his candidacy for the January nomination for secretary-treasurer.

John B. Moran, former director of safety and health for the Laborers, was named to the top policy position in the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, succeeding **Michael Silverstein**. Moran had served as deputy assistant secretary for worker health and safety at the Department of Energy this year. During his tenure at LIUNA, he was a member of the Advisory Committee on Construction Safety and Health, which advises OSHA on construction-related regulations and enforcement.

John J. Toner was named executive secretary of the National Labor Relations Board. Toner, who has been serving as acting executive secretary since June, will succeed **John C. Truesdale**, who has served as a member of the board since 1994.

Wilma B. Liebman was appointed deputy director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. Liebman has been special assistant to the director for the past two years. She will be responsible for daily operations of the national office.

The American Labor Museum/Botto House National Landmark will be exhibiting women's artistic works through 1996. "American Workers," which opens in January, is a collection of oil paintings by **Kathleen Farrell** dealing with women's occupations. The second exhibit, "The Best Woman For The Job," is a photo exhibit of nontraditional working women by **Cindy Gail Konits**. The final exhibit, "A. Philip Randolph," is a custom-made graphics exhibit by **Linda DeLoach** depicting Randolph's lifetime achievements.

AWARDS

Arthur Goldberg, the late former Supreme Court justice and secretary of labor, was inducted into the Labor Department's Hall of Fame on Dec. 12. Goldberg, one of the main architects of the AFL-CIO merger in 1955, is the 19th person honored posthumously in the Hall of Fame. He was selected for his achievements in improving labor-management relations and in providing job training and placement for unemployed workers under the Kennedy administration's Manpower Development and Training Act and Area Redevelopment Act.

Lugene Nelson, executive vice president of the Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO, received the A. Philip Randolph Achievement Award at the APRI-Coalition of Black Trade Unionists' 19th annual banquet. Nelson worked in various positions in the UAW before his election to his current post. Other awardees include **Flora Walker**, president, Council 25 AFSCME; **Bertha Louise Poe**, secretary-treasurer of the Michigan AFL-CIO; **Leon Willis**, president of UAW Local 300; **Donald W. Boggs**, president of School Administrators Local 28; **Willie Hampton**, Service Employees Local 79; **Charlie L. Gross**, president, UAW Local 653; and **Orphalandus "Brad" Brasfield**, administrative assistant to the UAW president.

Laborers' President **Arthur A. Coia** donated $125,000 from the Arthur Coia Educational Trust to fund half-tuition scholarships for Providence College students. Coia, a 1964 graduate of Providence College, established the fund in memory of his father, the late **Arthur E. Coia**, a labor pioneer.

The AFT received the General Excellence Award during last month's Union Privilege Editors luncheon. The award recognizes editors and their staffs for doing an outstanding job of promoting Union Privilege programs in their publications and mailings.

DEATH

Peter G. Velasco, former Farm Workers secretary-treasurer, died after an illness in California. He was 85.

Velasco was one of 1,500 Filipino-American farm workers who struck Delano-area grape growers in September 1965, touching off the five-year Delano grape strike and boycott.

Velasco immigrated to the United States in 1931 and worked in a variety of Los Angeles restaurants. He later worked as a grape worker and, in 1960, joined the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee, which merged with the National Farm Workers Association under the leadership of Cesar Chavez in 1966.

Velasco was named to UFW's executive board in 1971, elected secretary-treasurer in 1980 and served in that position until his retirement in 1988.

Labor brings cheer to striking Staley families

By James B. Parks

Union members from around the country are getting personally involved in helping the families that have been locked out at A.E. Staley Co. for the past two-and-a-half years.

A huge caravan bearing food and toys donated by St. Louis-area unions roared into Decatur, Ill., on Dec. 11, bringing home the special unity among workers that is the union movement.

On the bargaining front, AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney took the workers' cause directly to Sir Neal Shaw, chief executive officer of Staley's parent Tate & Lyle, and to the CEO of Staley during a meeting in London, where Sweeney detoured on his way to join President Clinton on his trip to Ireland.

Meanwhile, the locked-out Paperworkers will vote on a new contract proposal presented by Staley Dec. 13. The voting is expected to be completed during the week of Dec. 18.

The caravan "was an overwhelming, spectacular effort . . . The rank and file were the key," said Karen Krshul, assistant to St. Louis AFL-CIO President Robert J. Kelley. "The message really hit home."

The caravan consisted of a tractor-trailer, donated and driven by Teamsters, and a full-size rental truck, rented by the Electrical Workers, full of food and toys. Some 50 union members from the St. Louis metropolitan area accompanied the trucks.

The unions collected enough money to buy $24,000 worth of food, $3,000 worth of toys and to donate another $30,000 to the Staley Adopt-a-Family relief fund. Several unions made donations separate from those from the central labor council, Krshul said, "and there are still food and donations coming in."

To raise its donation, an Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers local canceled its annual Christmas party for shop stewards and officers. Instead, it donated $7,000 to the Staley families. One Steelworkers local, which already had donated food and money, raised another $1,000 by collecting money at the plant gate the morning before the caravan left. The Pipefitters at Anheuser-Busch collected $4,000.

A Food and Commercial Workers local in New Jersey drove to St. Louis to join the caravan and donated $7,300. While the other union members were unloading food, the New Jersey UFCW members walked the picket line with the Staley workers.

Getting food is critical to the Staley workers, who are generally older and have fewer big debts such as mortgages, said Chris Marston of the AFL-CIO Community Services Department. The Paperworkers have a "first-class food operation," Marston said, that distributes food for 500 families twice a month. The union has teamed up with the World Share co-op to supplement the food program.

For more information on the Staley Adopt-a-Family Program, call Barrie Williams at 217/872-2209. Donations should made payable to Adopt-a-Family Program, c/o UPIU Local 7837, 3080-B Kandy Lane, Decatur, Ill. 62526.



UNITE! photo

Approximately 1,700 workers and community leaders rallied in front of the Super Kmart in Greensboro, N.C., to protest discriminatory practices, one of several holiday protests against various retailers.

7 more protest days till Christmas

Unions continue focus on abuses by retailers

By Muriel H. Cooper

While retailers are counting down shopping days, consumers are increasing their protest days against working conditions in the apparel industry.

Members of UNITE! and the Food and Commercial Workers across the country are working with community coalitions, demonstrating in front of major retailers and asking them to be accountable for the conditions in which their goods are produced.

"The GAP contracts out work to countries like El Salvador and Honduras where child labor is employed, and where workers are paid 50 cents an hour and are often required to work 70-hour shifts, in addition to suffering other human rights abuses," said UNITE!

The New York City demonstration drew a crowd of more than 300 people, including Judith Viera and Leslie Rodriguez, two teenagers who have worked in sweatshops in Central America.

A busload of students attending the rally from Manhattan's Notre Dame Academy were outraged that girls their ages were sewing clothes, said Nick Unger, the union's director of associate membership.

The union has called for nationwide action, urging members to visit their local GAP stores and speak to managers about sweatshop conditions in Central America.

"We want them to take responsibility for their actions and not just shut down the plants," Unger said. "We want them to be responsible for upgrading and improving conditions in shops when violations have occurred."

The union also has kept pressure on Kmart in the Greensboro, N.C., area, where workers are protesting discriminatory practices in the retailer's distribution center.

More than 1,700 people rallied Dec. 2 at a Kmart superstore in Greensboro, marking an escalation in the three-week-old local boycott of Kmart that was called by the union and the Pulpit Forum, Greensboro's alliance of African-American ministers.

The store has refused to provide the majority non-white workers with wages comparable to those paid at the company's other distribution facilities that employ mostly white workers.

"It means so much to us to see so many of our union brothers and sisters and our own pastors rallying behind us," said Deborah Holt, a Kmart employee. "We put Kmart on notice that their discrimination against us will not stand."

The workers and their supporters will continue to leaflet area Kmarts through the end of the year.

"It is a matter of moral conscience to stand in solidarity with those who are being discriminated against and mistreated," said the Rev. William Wright, president of the Pulpit Forum. "We will continue this struggle until fair and equal treatment is achieved for those workers."

The workers, who voted in 1993 to be represented by UNITE!, are still trying to negotiate a first contract with the company.

In a Seattle suburb, meanwhile, human rights activist Harry Wu spoke to 400 union members in front of Wal-Mart to launch the UFCW's campaign to get the attention of Wal-Mart shoppers. Wu urged the shoppers to avoid buying Chinese-made presents and decorations from the store, noting that the Chinese persecute Christians and use forced labor to produce export goods.

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UNION YES

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